

To Speed Steering Committee (SSC) – Speed and Infrastructure Programme (SIP)

From Luke Wilson and Andrew Burdett

Date 19 November 2021

Subject SH2 – Masterton to Featherston Speed Review – Direction following consultation feedback

Recommendations

- The Speed Steering Committee (SSC) acknowledge that the extents of the corridor is from William Donald Drive in southern Masterton to Renall Street in southern Featherston
- The SSC note that there is little support for the reduction of open road speed limits across New Zealand, and the decision on this corridor may set a precedent nationally, but particularly within the Wellington region. The result could make any future reductions of 100km/h speed limits to 80km/h speed limits more difficult
- There is better support for reducing speeds through the more urbanised areas of Carterton, Greytown and Featherston when compared to the more rural sections connecting these urban areas
- The transition of passing lanes to slow vehicle lanes is not well supported and a more pragmatic solution would be to monitor speeds and behaviours on the passing lanes following implementation to consider their future status
- Upon reading this paper, it is requested that the SSC give direction on the outcome of the SH2 Masterton to Featherston speed review, considering that the following approaches are available:
 1. **Approach One:** Speed limits are changed in line with the official consultation proposal (shown at Appendix A).
 2. **Approach Two:** The open road speed limits currently posted at 100km/h are maintained, with all other changes proposed at consultation being adopted
- Upon reading this paper, the SSC give direction on the outcome of the three passing lanes impacted by the speed review, considering that the following approaches are available:
 1. **Approach One:** All passing lanes are left untouched and no further works are required
 2. **Approach Two:** All passing lanes are transitioned into slow vehicle lanes in line with previous direction from Programme and Standards (**only required if speeds are reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h**)
 3. **Approach Three:** All passing lanes remain in their current form and monitoring is completed if the speed limit in this section is reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h (**only required if speeds are reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h**). Pre-implementation surveys have already been completed

Purpose

To achieve unanimously supported direction for implementing the SH2 Masterton to Featherston speed review, including the three passing lanes present along this corridor.

Introduction

The SH2 Masterton to Featherston corridor went to engagement in November 2019. Based on the technical assessment completed for this corridor, the sentiment gathered through engagement, as well

as the project team considering the interface between the speed and infrastructure projects, the proposal provided at Appendix A was taken to public consultation. It is noted that during the speed consultation, engagement also took place for the SH2 Masterton to Carterton infrastructure project and pedestrian crossings project.

The reason for the proposed changes held within the speed review consultation material are as follows:

- **Speed reductions:** the consultation proposal was agreed as the reduced speed limits align with the Road to Zero (R2Z) strategy, the safe system approach and also provides the best chance of achieving the targeted reduction in deaths and serious injuries. There is also limited protection (side barrier and median barrier) along the route between the more urban areas, meaning that the risk of serious injury or death is considered to be unacceptable at 100km/h. Therefore, the risk of retaining the open road speed limits at 100km/h was considered to outweigh the public seeing this as an unfavourable outcome
- **Passing Lanes:** during the speed review process, Programme and Standard's (P&S) view was that where passing lanes are present and speeds are proposed to be reduced, the likelihood of people breaking the speed limit to overtake vehicles in the left hand lane is encouraged / increased and therefore this behaviour needs to be mitigated. It is noted that since consultation took place for this corridor, a change in personnel within P&S has resulted in the approach to passing lanes being more pragmatic – data should be gathered on passing lanes pre and post implementation, with a decision made post implementation based on evidence. This new approach is considered to be appropriate for this corridor.

The technical assessment, the internal review form and the engagement summary report which provide more details on the process and decisions made for this corridor are linked below:

- Technical assessment → **Out of Scope**
- Internal review form → **Out of Scope**
- Engagement summary report → **Out of Scope**

Consultation Summary

Consultation took place on the proposal outlined above in July 2021. The consultation summary report is saved here → **ADD LINK WHEN AVAILABLE**. Following the consultation period, a number of submissions were made by the following key partners and stakeholders:

- Kieran McAnulty - MP for Wairarapa
- AA
- General public sentiment...

To summarise, these partners and stakeholders were in opposition of:

- Reducing open road speed limits from 100km/h to 80km/h
- Changes being made to the passing lanes

Based on the submissions made by the public, it is considered that their views are aligned with the partners and stakeholders.

It is noted that an additional meeting was completed with Mr McNulty and Emma Speight in September 2021. The summary of the meeting is provided below:

- Mr McNulty stated a strong sense of community opposition to the open road speed changes – particularly the section between Featherston and Greytown
- Mr McNulty generally supports the overall approach on both speed and infrastructure, but would really like to see other options explored on the Featherston to Greytown section
- Mr McNulty thinks that it is important to look at the speeds on the adjacent local roads where there is a high potential of rat running and speeds currently remain at 100%

To conclude, the SH2 Masterton to Featherston speed review in its current form is considered to present contention and risk to Waka Kotahi. Therefore, support and direction from the SSC is sought.

Approach to Implementation

Based on the information above, it is considered that two approaches are available with regards to speed:

1. **Approach One:** Speed limits are changed in line with the official consultation proposal (shown at Appendix A).
2. **Approach Two:** The open road speed limits currently posted at 100km/h are maintained, with all other changes proposed at consultation being adopted

The associated risks for each approach have been outlined below:

Approach	Associated Risk
<p>Approach One: Speed limits are changed in line with the official consultation proposal (shown at Appendix A).</p>	<p>Damage to the relationship with partners, stakeholders and the public would result.</p> <p>This risk is considered to be High.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the opposition, there may be further challenge from key stakeholders and partners where a legal challenge of the speed review process for this corridor is made.</p> <p>This risk is considered to be High.</p>
<p>Approach Two: The open road speed limits currently posted at 100km/h are maintained, with all other changes proposed at consultation being</p>	<p>The open road speed limits on this corridor have been assessed as being not safe and appropriate. Therefore, the collective risk for the corridor would benefit from lower speeds on these sections. If no changes to the open roads speed limits are made, Waka Kotahi will carry this burden if someone is then killed or seriously injured, and where speed played a critical factor. This will make any future conversations with the coroner extremely difficult to justify and reputationally damaging.</p> <p>The risk is considered to be Extreme.</p>

adopted

Not changing the speed limits on the open road sections, after they have been assessed as not being safe and appropriate would potentially undermine the reduction of open road speed limits from 100km/h to 80km/h Wellington, and nationally, where it has also been assessed as appropriate to do so.

This risk is considered to be **High**.

It is considered that three approaches are available with regards to the passing lanes:

1. **Approach One:** All passing lanes are left untouched and no further works are required
2. **Approach Two:** All passing lanes are transitioned into slow vehicle lanes in line with previous direction from Programme and Standards (**only required if speeds are reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h**)
3. **Approach Three:** All passing lanes remain in their current form and monitoring is completed if the speed limit in this section is reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h (**only required if speeds are reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h**). Pre- implementation surveys have already been completed

The associated risks for each approach have been outlined below:

Approach	Associated Risk
<p>Approach One: All passing lanes are left untouched and no further works are required</p>	<p>If the speed limit is reduced and no works are undertaken in relation to the passing lanes, this presents a potential safety risk. When speed is reduced and a passing lane is present, this reduces the speed differential between vehicles in the left lane and vehicles in the right lane. Therefore, vehicles in the right lane may be forced to break the speed limit if they wish to overtake vehicles in the left lane. This could be seen as a way to increase revenue through police enforcement.</p> <p>This may also lead to unsafe behaviours that could result in death or serious injury. For this reason, the risk is considered to be Very High.</p>
<p>Approach Two: All passing lanes are transitioned into slow vehicle lanes in line with previous direction from Programme and Standards (only required if speeds are reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h)</p>	<p>Key stakeholders, partners and the public will not be supportive of this approach. However, in reality, the way that a "slow vehicle lane" operates in comparison to a passing lane is not significant - they risk is likely to be related more to a perception of change.</p> <p>This risk is considered to be Moderate</p>

Approach Three: All passing lanes remain in their current form and monitoring is completed if the speed limit in this section is reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h (**only required if speeds are reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h**). Pre-implementation surveys have already been completed

Whilst reducing the speed limit where passing lanes are present may reduce the speed differential between vehicles in the left lane and vehicles in the right lane, this may also not be the case. Once any changes to the speed limits are made, behaviours may also change in line to comply with the new speeds. Therefore, changing the passing lane to a slow vehicle lane may not actually be required.

Therefore, collecting actual evidence of this will help to ensure the final decision is the right one for the corridor, rather than being based on assumptions.

This risk is considered to be **Moderate**.

Conclusion

Given the contentiousness of this corridor, the speed management project team is seeking confirmation from the SSC as to the approach that should be adopted for the speed review (including passing lanes) on SH2 between Masterton and Featherston. This decision must consider all works completed to date and the risks outlined above, with direction given in relation to the balance of effects i.e., risks vs what is the appropriate thing to do for the corridor.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

APPENDIX A – SH2 Masterton to Featherston Speed Review - Consultation Proposal



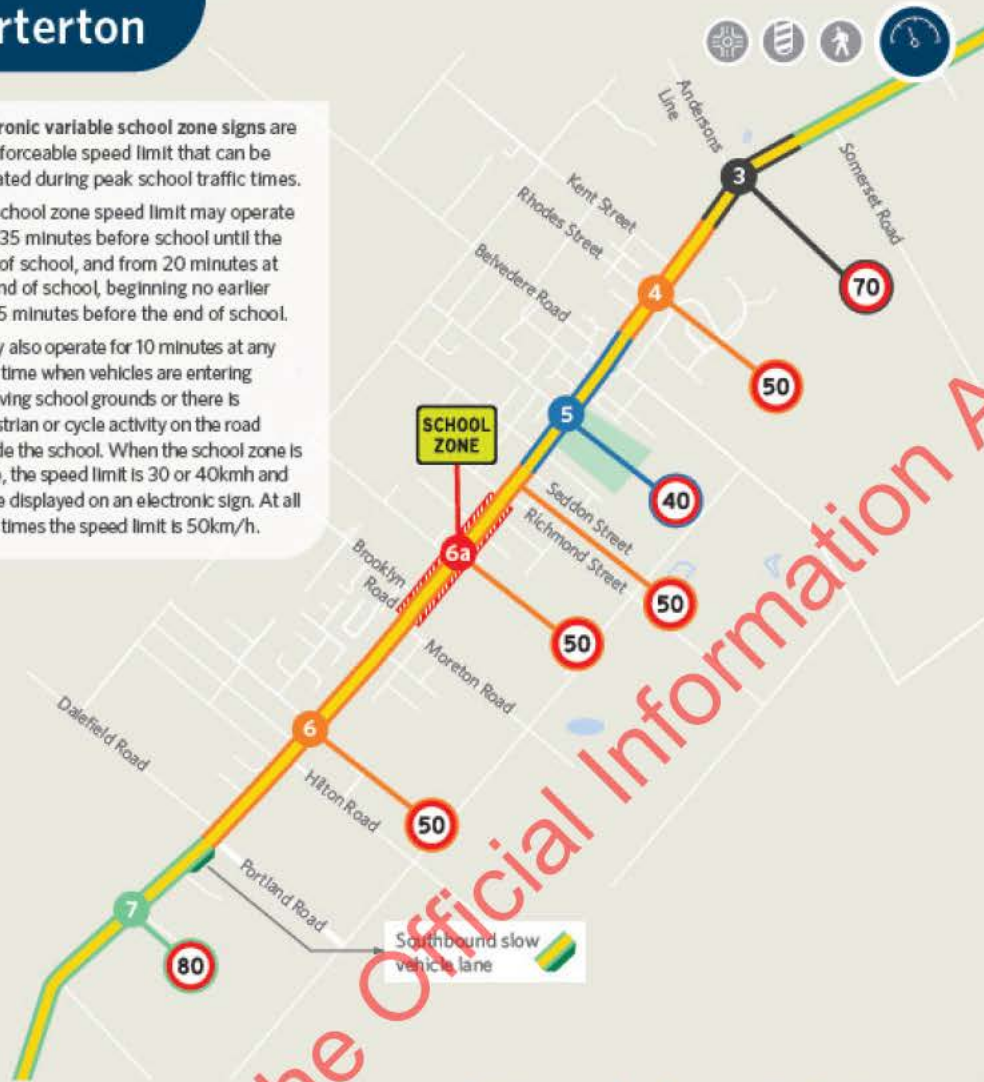
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Carterton

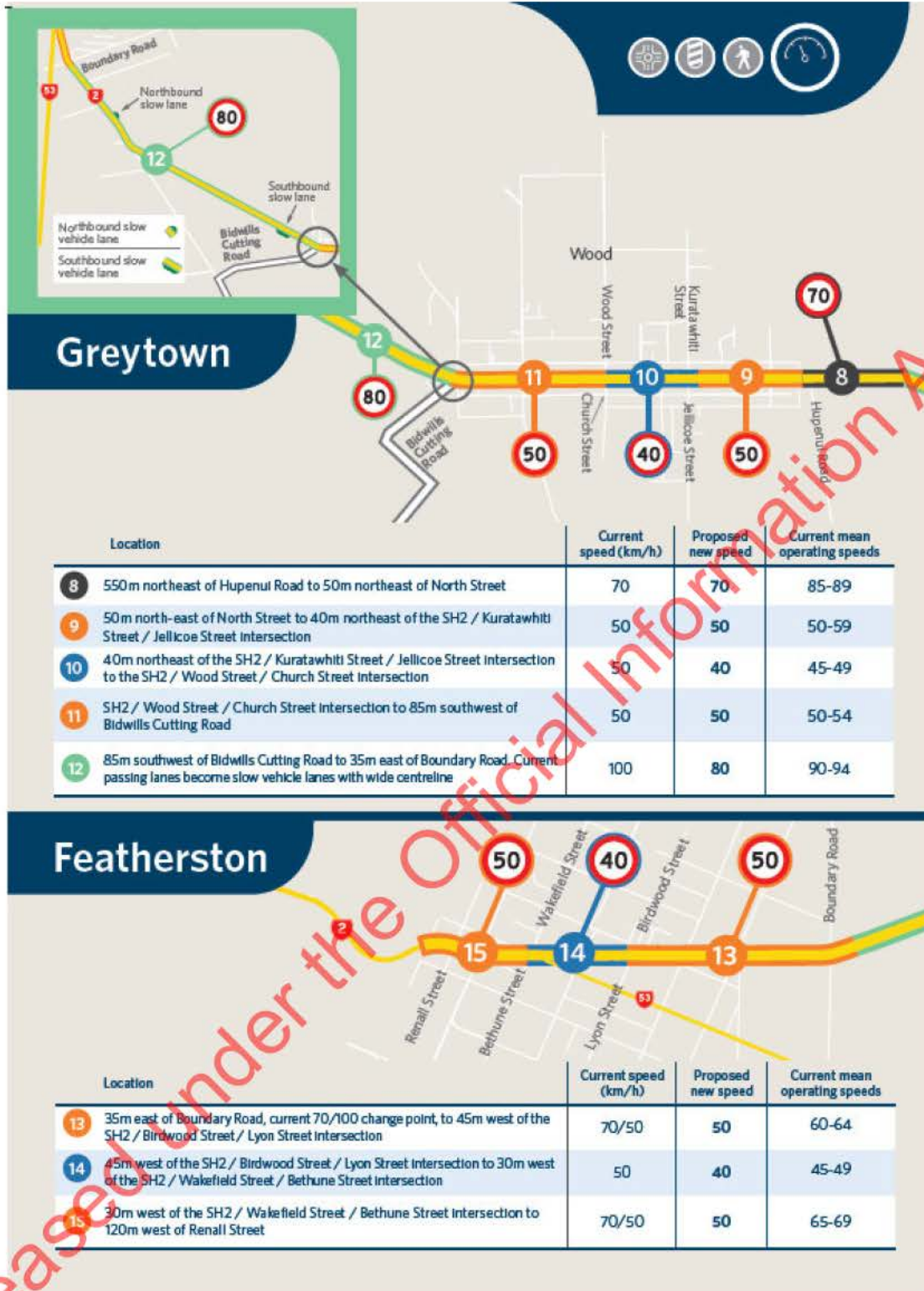
Electronic variable school zone signs are an enforceable speed limit that can be activated during peak school traffic times.

The school zone speed limit may operate from 35 minutes before school until the start of school, and from 20 minutes at the end of school, beginning no earlier than 5 minutes before the end of school.

It may also operate for 10 minutes at any other time when vehicles are entering or leaving school grounds or there is pedestrian or cycle activity on the road outside the school. When the school zone is active, the speed limit is 30 or 40kmh and will be displayed on an electronic sign. At all other times the speed limit is 50km/h.



Location	Current speed (km/h)	Proposed new speed	Current mean operating speeds
3 240m southwest of Somerset Road to 205m southwest of Andersons Line	70	70	65-69
4 205m southwest of Andersons Line to 130m northeast of the SH2 / Belvedere Road / Park Road roundabout	50	50	50-54
5 130m northeast of the SH2 / Belvedere Road / Park Road roundabout to 10m south of Seddon Street	50	40	40-44
6 10m south of Seddon Street to 50m southwest of Portland Road, (current 50/100 change point)	50	50	50-54
6a 40m north of Richmond Road to 70m northeast of Moreton Road	50 (40 advisory)	50 (school zone speed limit 30 or 40)*	50-54
7 50m southwest of Portland Road to 550m northeast of Hupenui Road. Current passing lane becomes a slow vehicle lane with wide centreline.	100	80	85-89



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