



SH2 KATIKATI TO TAURANGA SPEED REVIEW

Summary of the speed review consultation

WAKA KOTAHI NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY

OCTOBER 2020

1. BACKGROUND

In October 2019, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency consulted with local community, mana whenua, businesses and stakeholders on proposed safe and appropriate speeds for the stretch of State Highway 2 (SH2) from Katikati to Bethlehem, in the Bay of Plenty.

Both the local community and Waka Kotahi recognised the need for change to the current speed limits as this particular stretch of road is one of the highest-risk roads in the region. No matter what causes a crash, speed is always a factor in the severity. Put simply, the speed of impact can be the difference between walking away or being carried away from a crash.

Between 2009 and 2018 on this section of SH2, 27 people were killed and 77 were seriously injured.

This state highway covers areas with high levels of economic activity, involving heavy commercial vehicles and domestic and international tourism. This section of SH2 caters to a wide range of competing travel needs and vehicle types, with 43 intersections and over 100 driveways with direct access onto the road. The current speed limits along this corridor vary. There are rural stretches of road with limits of 100km/h and 90km/h and limits of 80km/h through the rural township of Te Puna. Speed limits are 90km/h and 50km/h at Tauranga's urban fringe. There is an existing Variable Speed Limit (VSL) of 100km/h-70km/h encompassing the Pahoia Road/Esdaile Road intersection, near Pahoia School.

Safety upgrades are also underway on SH2 between Waihi and Ōmokoroa. Safety improvements include intersection upgrades, roadside barriers, widened road shoulders and wide centrelines. These improvements, alongside safe and appropriate speed limits, will make SH2 safer for everyone.

2. CONSULTATION PROCESS

Prior to undertaking the formal consultation process, we completed numerous steps, including a speed management technical assessment of the road in accordance with the Settings of Speed Limit Rule. This identified the various existing speed limits on the road were not safe and appropriate for the current road characteristics and roadside environments along this corridor.

In 2018, we engaged with local stakeholders including Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Tauranga City Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council, mana whenua, schools, the Police, the Automobile Association (AA) and other road user groups. The engagement process provided us with feedback and local knowledge on how people use the road and their concerns. This helped us to decide if a speed limit change was the best thing to do to improve road safety, where new speed limits could begin or end, and if any other safety improvements might be needed.

On 21 October 2019, Waka Kotahi started formal consultation on proposed new speed limits for SH2 between Katikati to Bethlehem, Tauranga. The consultation was open for four weeks and closed on 18 November 2019.

Consultation materials provided evidence that supported the proposed safe and appropriate speed limits. This included current travel speeds and the characteristics of the road.

The consultation was advertised on local radio stations, Waka Kotahi's website and in the Katikati Advertiser and BOP Times publications. A media release was issued on 21 October 2019 and resulted in online and print media coverage ([NZ Herald](#), [SunLive](#)).

People were able to submit their views through the electronic form; hard copy submission forms which were available from locations such as the Western Bay of Plenty council office or library, via email or by ringing 0800 44 44 49.

3. CONSULTATION QUESTION

The consultation phase is used to seek any additional information from stakeholders or the public that will help inform the decision about the proposed speed limit changes.

During formal consultation we proposed new speed limits and asked the public the following question “**Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?**”

We consider all factors raised during formal consultation when making our decision on new permanent speed limits.

4. SUMMARY AND RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

Across the four-week consultation period we received a total of 576 submissions. We appreciated the response from the community and thank all those who provided their feedback.

The following table outlines the key issues and factors people raised in submissions, along with our responses to these concerns.

Factors	Waka Kotahi comment
<p>Katikati to Tauranga</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the speed limit will increase driver frustration. Road needs more passing lanes. Speed limit should be reduced even more to 60km/h rather than an open road speed of 80km/h. A four-lane highway needs to be constructed to accommodate traffic volumes. The existing road surface cannot accommodate the volume of traffic. Should be 90km/h the whole length. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been no recorded evidence death or serious injury crashes have increased on a section of road where the speed has been reduced, due to driver frustration or otherwise. Vehicles will be travelling at a more consistent speed that will reduce the need for overtaking and improve traffic flows, as well as reducing crashes. Considering the existing traffic flow and crash record, the speed reduction is the most immediate and efficient safety intervention we can implement to reduce deaths and serious injuries on this road. Passing lanes tend to encourage faster speeds than what is safe and appropriate for this section of road. Short passing lanes can lead to poor judgement, while passing and merging, and increase head-on crash risk. Drivers are expected to adjust their travelling speeds to the weather conditions, road environment and show patience. The Takitimu North Link between Tauranga and Ōmokoroa will provide improvements to safety and capacity was approved February 2020. The technical assessment did not support a safe and appropriate speed of 60km/h for the full length. The current environment would not support this lower speed and would need significant engineering measures to help drivers understand why they need to change to the lower speed. The 60km/h speed limit is typically used within rural townships, such as Te Puna, or on tortuous hilly sections of highway. Ongoing maintenance will continue to the required standard in parallel with the speed review. 90km/h is generally only approved by exception. In this instance, there is already a long section of existing 90km/h within this corridor that has a poor crash history since being implemented.

Factors	Waka Kotahi comment
<p>Pahoia School Variable (60km/h)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variable speed limits (VSL) should be applied at all major intersections not just the Pahoia/Esdaille intersection. The speed limit of SH2 at Pahoia does not impact on child safety since no children cross or venture near to SH2 outside the school. Similarly, parents do not stop on SH2 to pick up or drop off their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 90km/h would not achieve a notable safety benefit in the context of this corridor (as the highest volume section of the corridor is already at 90km/h). Intersection Speed Zones, that temporarily lower the speed at intersections when vehicles are turning were not considered as part of this speed limit review as the focus was more on the open road speeds. These can be considered as further safety interventions if this is shown to be a further concern as part of the monitoring process. The VSL at SH2/Pahoia/Esdaille intersection is a School Zone and was implemented to assist with the peak turning and traffic movements associated with Pahoia School. The reference to the VSL impact on child safety (at the roadside of SH2) isn't quite relevant in this instance, given that the 60km/h limit is in place to assist vehicles with school-age passengers to safely turn into and out of SH2.

5. DECISION

The table below shows the recommendations Waka Kotahi formally consulted on between 21 October 2019 and 18 November 2019.

The submissions did not identify any issues that Waka Kotahi had not already considered.

The outcome for the speed limit changes are in line with the speed limits proposed at consultation, with the exception of the section between Te Puna and Bethlehem where the speed limit will not change and will be reassessed if the future function of the road changes. The permanent speed limits outlined below will come into effect on Friday 11 December 2020.

We will notify stakeholders by letter and the public will be notified via media release, and local print and radio advertising, ahead of the new speed limit signs being installed and the new speed limits taking effect.

When the new speed limits take effect, the area will be monitored to ensure the new permanent speed limits and supporting treatments are working effectively and to determine if any further changes are required.

A table of the new speed limits are on the next page.

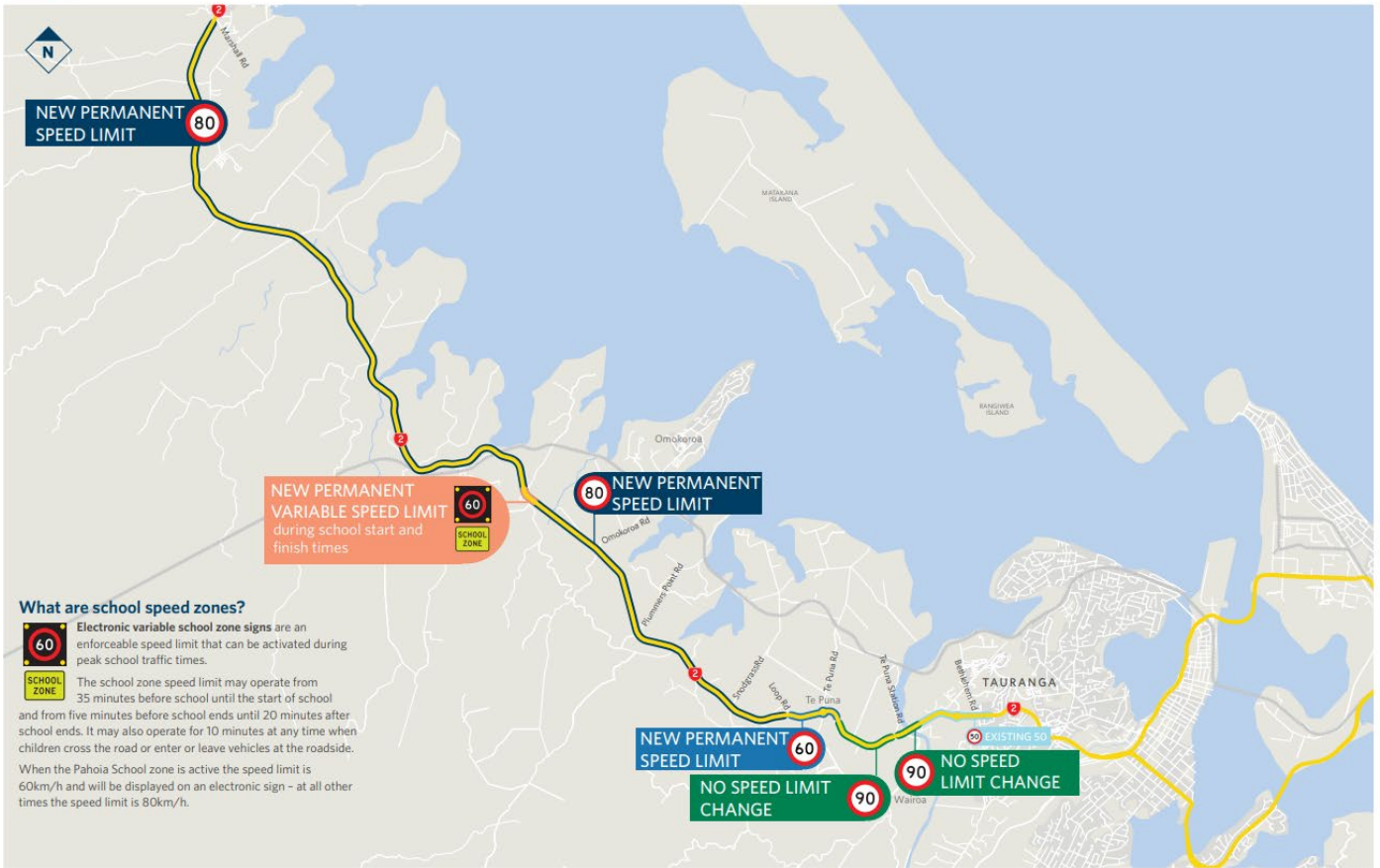
The following new speed limits will apply from Friday 11 December 2020:

SH2 Katikati to Bethlehem, Tauranga	Existing speed limits	New speed limits from 11 December 2020
<p>Katikati to Te Puna</p> <p>From 170m south of Marshall Road to 180m east of Loop Road.</p>	100km/h and 90km/h	80km/h
<p>Pahoia School zone</p> <p>From 140m north of Pahoia Road to 365m south-east of Esdaile Road.</p> <p>The variable speed limit will lower the speed limit from 80km/h outside the school to 60km/h at peak school traffic times. This is 35 minutes before the start of school until the start of school, and 20 minutes at the end of school, beginning no earlier than five minutes before the end of school.</p> <p>It also may operate for 10 minutes at any other time when there is a school-related activity.</p>	100km/h and variable 70km/h	80km/h and variable 60km/h
<p>Te Puna</p> <p>From 180m east of Loop Road to 360m east of Te Puna Road.</p>	80km/h	60km/h
<p>Te Puna</p> <p>From 360m east of Te Puna Road to 135m west of Te Puna Station Road.</p>	90km/h	No speed limit change*
<p>Bethlehem</p> <p>From 135m west of Te Puna Station Road to 370m east of Bethlehem Road.</p>	90km/h and 50km/h	No speed limit change*

*Speed limits to the east of Te Puna, and the rural/urban boundary shift west of Bethlehem, have not changed. Waka Kotahi will re-assess the speed limit through this section in the future if the function of the road changes. For example, due to growth and development changing the way we use the road, or if new cycling infrastructure is constructed.

Map showing the permanent speed limits

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6. SUBMISSIONS

You can view the submissions we received for this speed review [here](#).