



SH2 MASTERTON TO FEATHERSTON SPEED REVIEW AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Community engagement summary

WAKA KOTAHI NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY

JANUARY 2020

1. BACKGROUND

Crash statistics

10-year SH2 Crash Statistics – Masterton to Featherston	
10-year Period Start	January 2010
10-year Period End	December 2019
Total crashes	488
Total Injuries – All	220
Total Injuries – Fatal	4
Total Injuries – Serious	28
Total Injuries – Minor	188

Safety improvements in the Wairarapa

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency has been looking at ways to improve State Highway 2 (SH2) in the Wairarapa region.

This section of highway is a key route connecting the Wairarapa to Wellington and the central and eastern North Island. It's important for locals, economic development and tourism and we are focused on making it safer and easier to travel on.

We know that deaths and serious injuries can be avoided by making some relatively simple but effective changes like adding safety barriers, looking at speeds and improving intersections.

We are reviewing speeds between Masterton and Featherston to make sure they are safe and appropriate. We have started designing safety improvements, including new roundabouts, flexible safety barriers and turnaround facilities for the stretch of road between Masterton and Carterton. We are also looking at pedestrian crossings along the corridor to see if they are in the right place or need to be upgraded.



2. ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

We knew it was important to give the community an overview of the various interventions being planned in the Wairarapa to improve safety on the state highway. For people to be able to discuss what they felt was a safe and appropriate speed it was important to understand how these infrastructure changes would alter the road environment.

Community engagement was completed in November with drop-in events in Featherston, Greytown, Carterton and Masterton as well as a maildrop and online engagement via an interactive map. The engagement period closed on the 4th of December.

Thank you to everyone who came along to one of the events or who used the interactive online map.

3. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

We received more than 900 comments via the printed forms, via email or online during the engagement period. Most comments focused on the speed review as well as suggestions for highway and township improvements. We appreciate the responses from stakeholders and the community and thank all those who provided feedback.

The interactive online map was a very popular way for those who were unable to make the drop-in events to have their say, and there were 2829 visits to the website.

Other feedback - some of the feedback we received raised matters that were outside the scope of the speed review or the current scope of infrastructure changes. These included issues about road surface condition, driver training, town bypass options, bridges, requests for speed reviews in other areas, improvements at intersections, cycling paths as well the installation of more directional road signage. Where possible we've passed this feedback on to the relevant Waka Kotahi internal project team or local authority.

We've summarised some of the major themes expressed during the public engagement below.



Total site visits	2829
Comments	785
Average time on site	4:45 min

Percentage of comments

• Speed review	34%
• Roundabouts and barriers	14.2%
• Pedestrian crossings	11.7%
• Ideas and suggestions	39.1%

Feedback: Speed review

- **The majority of locals thought that speed needs to be reduced** through the towns of Featherston, Carterton, Greytown and Masterton and that the current 70-100km/h speed limits are far too fast. Many said they needed to go down to 50km/h to prevent crashes.
- **A number of people thought that the speeds should remain the same** as the route gets congested. Some people felt that lowering the speed limits could lead to longer journey times and increasingly frustrated drivers more prone to making bad decisions.
- **Wider road shoulders** – SH2 is seen as a ‘country’ road as it has no formed road shoulders and is narrow. Locals would like to see this section of SH2 widened to include shoulders on both sides to make it safer for large freight and cyclists to use.
- **Encourage cycling to reduce traffic** – locals commented that cycling doesn’t occur very often along the highway and mentioned they would cycle more if the road was safer and speeds were lower.
- **Country roads are dangerous** – people felt that trucks speed through towns making it difficult for residents to shop safely. They also felt that freight is too big for some areas, which causes dangerous situations to occur.
- **A strong desire for safer intersections, with a preference for roundabouts** – people felt that intersections needed to be made safer. The preferred intersection type is a roundabout as traffic lights slow traffic down too much.

Feedback: Roundabouts and barriers

- **Support for roundabouts at Ngaumutawa Rd and Norfolk Rd intersection.** overwhelmingly, locals supported improvements at these intersections and look forward to much safer journeys on the state highway with their families.
- **Many locals wanted to see detailed designs** - people were interested in the size of the roundabouts and how they would fit into the surrounding area. Some people wanted to see one lane roundabouts that fit into the road, while others felt that two lane roundabouts were necessary. People said the designers need to be aware of other issues and activities near the intersections, such as the bus stop, visibility and the amount of heavy traffic, so these can be considered.
- **Roundabouts need to cater for pedestrians and cyclists too** – walking and cycling should be considered a mode of transport and provided for at intersections.
- **Traffic lights instead of roundabouts** – a small number of people felt that the intersections on SH2 should be upgraded with traffic lights instead of roundabouts. Some worried that the roundabouts may slow traffic or create congestion.
- **Supportive of safety barrier** – some people were supportive of median barriers and highlighted the risk of head-on crashes on the route. Some people liked that median safety barriers would prevent right turns onto the state highway, which they saw as dangerous manoeuvres, especially during peak times.
- **Concerned about safety barrier** – some people raised concerns about driver frustration and being stuck behind slow moving agricultural vehicles, if median safety barriers were installed. There were concerns about space for cyclists on the route if side barriers were

installed. A few people were concerned about how emergency services will operate with a flexible road safety barrier down the middle of SH2.

- **Additional passing / slow vehicle / double lanes should be provided** – most of SH2 is a single lane in either direction. Locals would like to see more passing lanes or slow vehicle bays added, especially with the volume of freight on this road. They believe this will relieve some of the frustration that comes with being stuck behind freight going 90km/h.
- **People wanted the Wiltons Road/East Taratahi intersection ‘squared up’ to make it safer** - others felt East Taratahi should be closed completely, with all traffic fed up to the new roundabout at Norfolk Road or onto Hughes Line Road. Turning lanes and new signage to warn for wildlife were also mentioned. The camber of the road in some areas was also seen as an issue for some people.
- **Side safety barriers** were needed around Solway School to protect children from fast-moving traffic and large trucks.
- **Other suggestions** to make roads safer included rumble strips as locals felt they would reduce the chances of drivers leaving their lane unintentionally. Side safety barriers were also a popular idea on the open road sections. Removing trees to improve sight lines, removing power poles near the Norfolk Road roundabout and other intersections were highlighted as ways to improve safety. Closing off right-turns from some roads onto the highway, such as East Taratahi Road, was seen as a good way to improve safety, with many people saying they felt unsafe turning onto State Highway 2. Some people believe a bypass around Masterton, Carterton and Greytown is needed.
- **There were many comments** about other intersections along SH2 that could be upgraded. The following intersections received the majority of comments:
 - SH2/Chester Road
 - SH2 Bethune / Wakefield / Fitzherbert / Revans Streets in Featherston
 - SH2 East Taratahi
 - SH2/ SH53 and Boundary Road
 - Main Street / Humphries Street / Papawai Road intersection

Feedback: Pedestrian crossings

- **Support for improved pedestrian crossings** - locals thought that improved pedestrian crossings were needed in the towns along SH2.
- **Crossings should be raised along SH2** – many locals said this would be a good idea as it forces cars to slow down and let pedestrians cross the road.
- **Concerned about raised pedestrian crossings** – some people felt raised pedestrian crossings were not necessary on the state highway. A common alternative mentioned was raised crossings outside of schools, supermarkets and retail centres, and flat crossings on nearby local roads.
- **Better visibility around current crossings needed** – there are carparks, blind corners and trees in the way of the pedestrian crossings that could be moved to better ensure safety of pedestrians while crossing the road.
- **More pedestrian crossings wanted along this stretch of SH2** – namely at the following locations:
 - Plimsoll Avenue
 - Lyon Street

- High Street North
 - Opposite the St James Shopping centre
 - Perry Street, crossing SH2
 - Across to the War Memorial
 - Further south in Solway for Solway School
 - Across to Otairua Reserve
- **Issues around drivers not respecting pedestrian crossings** – people said many drivers don't stop for pedestrians or even wait until they have crossed into the other lane to go.

4. NEXT STEPS

Speed review

We've read all the feedback and will use these insights along with additional technical analysis to determine what safe and appropriate speeds are for this road.

We will be coming back to the community to formally consult on these proposed speed limits in 2021. The consultation will give locals and others who are interested an opportunity to let us know if there are any other factors that we should consider when making our decision. To stay up to date with the planned events we encourage people to sign up to the project newsletter on the project page www.nzta.govt.nz/sh2-wairarapa

Roundabouts and barriers

The project team will use the feedback received to help shape their draft designs for the stretch of highway between Masterton and Carterton.

We will continue with our investigations, design and other work, including speaking with key stakeholders and landowners and we will look to update the community again in early to mid-2021.

Raised pedestrian crossings

Overall, the community feedback we received at engagement was supportive of raised pedestrian crossings in Masterton, Carterton, Greytown and Featherston. In the next three years detailed designs will be completed for each site.

Construction will begin on the first site in 2021 with the project expected to be completed 2024.

