



Awakeri to Whakatāne Safety Improvements Project

Engagement summary



State Highway 30 between Awakeri and Whakatāne has been identified as a high-risk rural road.

As part of our commitment to the Road to Zero strategy, we have proposed safety improvements to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on this road. These improvements include safety barriers, new roundabouts and seal widening.

During the detailed design process, we looked at how the road is used and carried out technical investigations.

Why we engaged with the community



To make sure we get the designs right, we sought feedback on what we're considering from people who have an interest in, or use the road.

We are now using this feedback from the community to assist with the detailed design ahead of applying for funding to construct and put the safety improvements in place.

What we did

We began engagement conversations in mid-2022. We initially focused on getting feedback from iwi and hapū representatives, Whakatāne District Council staff, landowners, businesses, emergency services (police, fire and emergency and ambulance) and other key stakeholders such as heavy haulage, cycling groups, schools and bus companies. Representatives met with our project managers – either in person or online.

We also met with council elected members and attended meetings of Rangitaiki and Whakatāne-Ōhope community boards.

In March 2023, we held 4 community open days to listen to feedback and update the local community on progress and next steps.

Between September 2022 and April 2023, we used a variety of tools to share information and updates and to gather feedback.

This included:

- Project website which hosted information about the project.
- Project information sheets.
- E-newsletters to keep subscribers up to date.
- Print and radio advertising.
- Digital advertising.
- Social media posts.
- Community open days.
- Council meetings.
- Hui.
- Individual landowner and stakeholder letters.
- Individual landowner and stakeholder meetings.
- Industry forums.
- Media releases and responses.
- Letterbox drops.
- Project email bopprojects@nzta.govt.nz

Feedback we received

These conversations helped us understand how the community use the road now, and their aspirations for future use. People were able to provide feedback at the sessions, via email, letter or individual phone/online conversations.



Nearly

500

feedback notes gathered during open days



15

written feedback responses/emails



59

form submissions

What we did summary



180

attended drop-in sessions



16

email/phone conversations with landowners (as alternative to meetings)



66

separate meetings with landowners



4

drop-in sessions

What we heard

We sought feedback to uncover specific insights into how and why people currently used the state highway and how the proposed safety improvements might affect them now or in the future.

Most common themes

We heard how important SH30 from Awakeri to Whakatāne is to all those in the community.

Early on we heard that the SH30/Mill Road intersection needed to be included in the proposed safety improvements. As a result, a proposed roundabout design was included for the community to consider.

Diverse use

- The road is used frequently by farmers and contractors on wide and other agricultural vehicles, moving stock across the road, between blocks of property. Other road users want to be able to pass these vehicles or activities safely, including passing slow moving wide machinery.
- Emergency service vehicles should be able to pass other vehicles with no delay.
- Other users include school buses, delivery vehicles, residents, longer distance travellers, commuters, retirees, parents taking school children to/from school or bus stops, and other service providers and delivery vehicles etc.
- People on bikes want to be able to safely use and cross the road.

Intersections

- The SH30/Mill Road intersection is used by a range of vehicle types including many heavy vehicles. It's considered the most dangerous intersection by both users and those driving past. There was considerable support for the roundabout design once it was introduced.

- Thornton Road intersection is dangerous and a roundabout would be welcomed.
- The Shaw Road intersection is dangerous, the speed limit is too fast and this will worsen as future growth occurs.
- Other intersections – there are concerns about roads identified as left in, left out (ie Angle, Luxton, Paroa, Huna roads), increased travel on local roads, access for cyclists and longer distances/time to travel.

Flexible median barriers

- The feedback on the flexible median barrier was mostly unsupportive. There was a desire to consider wider corridor with wide centre lines and lower speed limits first before installing median barriers.

Speed

- Most comments about speed were supportive of lower speed limits – 80km/h.
- The priority for lower speed limits were from Whakatāne through to Kope Drain first, particularly past Mill and Shaw roads, and to extend lower speed limits past Awakeri School.

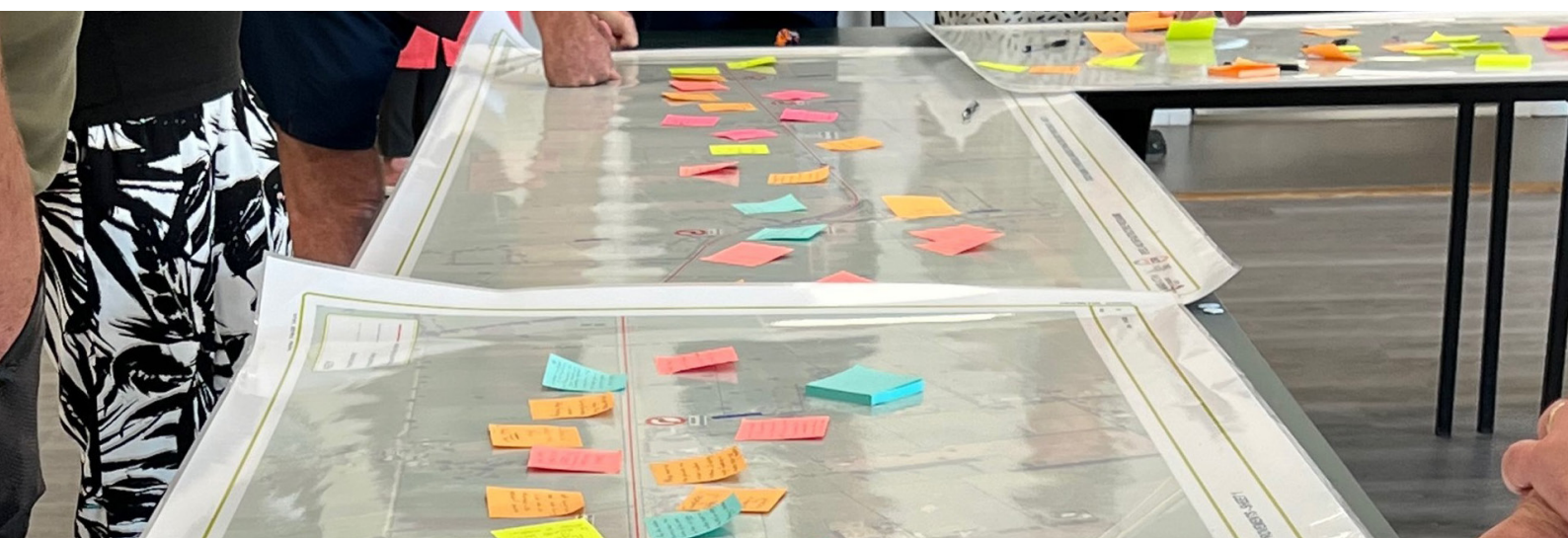
Coordination/phasing

- There was support for wider centre lines to be put in place, increased maintenance on the road, roundabouts in place and lower speed limits to be trialled before going ahead with flexible median barriers.

General

- Support for investigating if the Kope Bridge can be widened.
- People were keen for more gaps, passing lanes and pullover areas.

Note: There were some who fully supported implementing the safety improvements, including the median barriers.





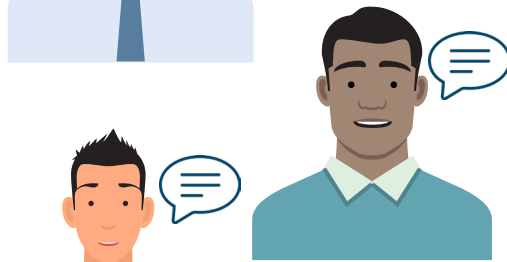
What they said

'Reduce speed limit as first option. Then reassess crash data.'

'Consider connection for cycling between Te Rahu and Luxton Roads.'



'Speed reduction, roundabouts, cameras all in favour - no to wire rope.'



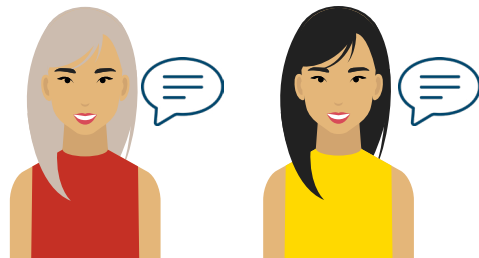
'Need consistency of wider shoulders all through the design.'



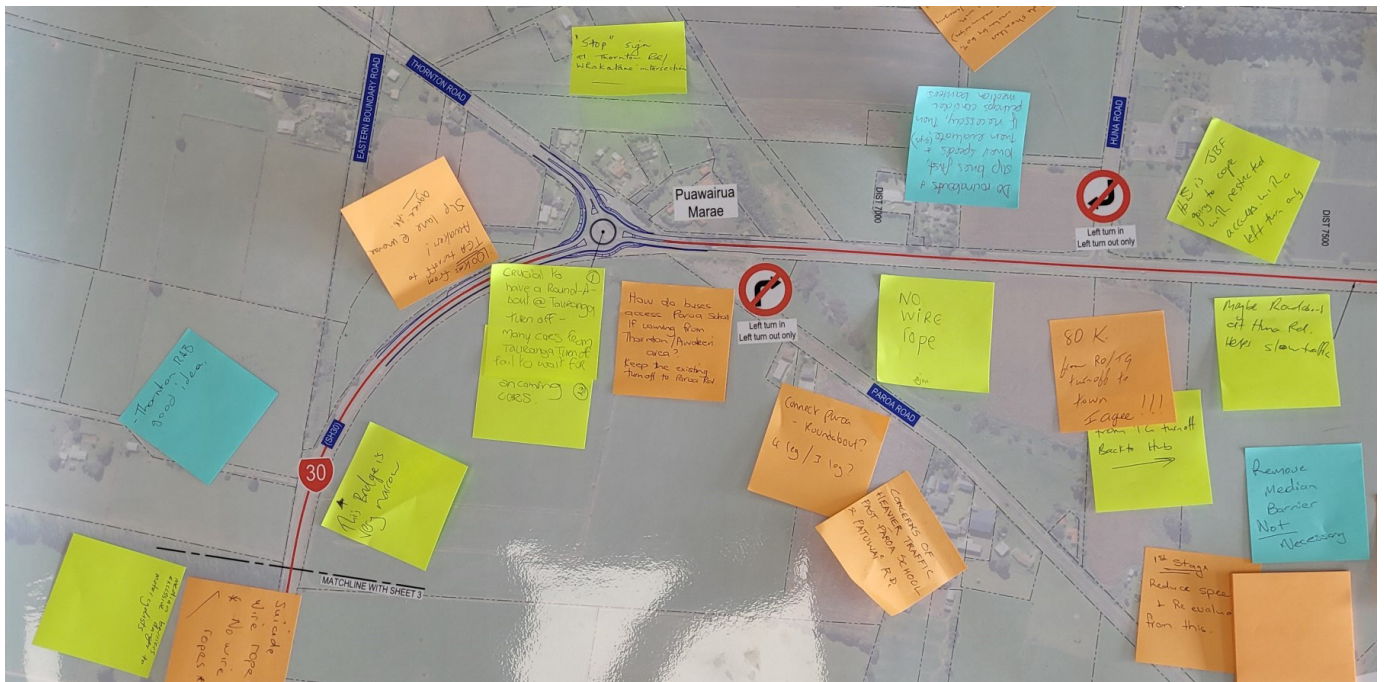
'Wire rope barrier outside of school - is this possible?'

'It was very informative.'

'All in all, my solution is compromise.'



'This stretch of road is dangerous with a high traffic flow. As part of the improvements, I would like to request that a walk/cycleway between Whakatāne and Awakeri be considered.'





Community engagement events

Waka Kotahi, working alongside Beca and Whakatāne District Council engaged at 4 community drop-in sessions in March 2023.

We shared maps of the proposed road design, and separate designs of the 4 roundabouts.

Supporting information was also on display and to take away, and the project team were freely available.

- Awakeri Events Centre
Thursday 30 March 2023
11:30am to 2pm and 3pm to 6pm
- Gateway Theatre, Whakatāne
Friday 31 March 2023
8am to 10am

Next steps

When the detailed design is finalised, we will let you know how suggestions and comments have been addressed.

Late 2023 - complete detailed design and apply for construction funding from 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme.

Mid-2024 - confirm (or not) construction funding.

Late 2024 - construction begins - if funding confirmed.



For more information visit the project webpage or email the team:



www.nzta.govt.nz/sh30a2w



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