



Tirau to Tarukenga Safety improvements



State Highway 5 (SH5) between Tirau and Tarukenga has been identified as a high-risk rural road that can be made safer and prioritised for investment in safety improvements.

Improvements have been completed between Ngongotahā and Tarukenga and we are now turning our focus to the section from Tirau to Tarukenga.

This section of SH5 is an important route for locals and tourists, heavy commercial and agricultural vehicles travelling in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty, and for those travelling further afield.

Between 2011 and 2021, 16 people died and 58 were seriously injured on this road.

A feasibility study investigating potential improvements was completed in early 2022. We worked with mana whenua and councils and their feedback helped us to identify a preferred option.

Proposed improvements include roundabouts at key intersections and flexible median safety barriers. Gaps will be left in the barriers at key locations to provide safe places for motorists to turn around.

No changes to the road are proposed through Fitzgerald Glade to preserve the special character of this beloved area.

The proposed improvements mean some people will have to change the way they use the road in the future, but these measures will save lives and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on this road.

These improvements will complement work already completed between Tarukenga and Ngongotahā on SH5 and work underway at several locations along SH1 between Cambridge and Taupō.

These safety improvements will be delivered in stages over time as funding is confirmed and detailed designs are developed for each section of the highway. To develop a detailed design, we look at how the road is used and carry out technical investigations. To make sure we get the designs right, we will engage with iwi partners, landowners and road users so their feedback can be taken into consideration.

We will share information about our progress, as we confirm the final design and funding for each stage, and when the work will be delivered.

What we are doing now

We are currently developing the detailed design for the 2.5km section between Whites Road and Harwoods Road.

The safety measures proposed include:

- roundabouts at Harwoods Road and potentially Whites Road
- flexible median barrier
- widening the road shoulders where necessary to accommodate the barriers and give drivers space to pull over in an emergency.

Our teams are carrying out site investigations and seeking feedback on the proposed design from mana whenua, potentially affected landowners and residents, road users and the community. The information we receive will be considered as we progress the design for this section.

We will share updates about our progress as information becomes available.

Keep up to date by checking our website:
nzta.govt.nz/projects/sh5-tirau-to-tarukenga-safety-improvements

Email: WaikatoProjects@nzta.govt.nz



We are making your roads safer

Road to Zero - our road safety strategy

At Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, we are focussed on delivering a wide range of safety improvements to reduce of serious crashes on our roads. This work forms part of Road to Zero, our national safety strategy in which we are aiming for a 40% reduction in deaths and serious injuries on New Zealand roads by 2030.

To do this we need to create a safe transport system; one that recognises humans make mistakes and is designed so that these mistakes do not need to cost us our lives. Steady progress towards this target would mean approximately 750 fewer people would be killed and 5,600 fewer would be seriously injured on our roads by 2030.

Over recent years, you will have noticed changes on state highways across the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions, as we have installed proven safety interventions such as flexible median barriers, roundabouts and safe turning areas. Once in place these measures significantly reduce the number of serious crashes.

Flexible median barriers save lives

Flexible median barriers are a key part of this project.

They put a barrier between you and an oncoming car, truck or motorcycle. This means that if someone loses control or drifts across the centreline, the result isn't a deadly head-on crash. We know median barriers down the centreline are very effective, because of the number of times they get hit.

They are already making a difference around the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions:

- Several kilometres of flexible median barriers were installed on State Highway 1 between Cambridge and Piarere in 2020. In the first four months of installation, the barriers were hit 40 times. That's 40 incidents which had the potential to result in serious head-on crashes.



- On SH2 at Bethlehem Tauranga, 1km flexible median barrier was installed in 2013. In the 10-year period before installation, one person died and 11 people were seriously injured along this short section of highway. Since the barriers were installed, there have been no crashes causing death or serious injury here. Since 2015, the barrier has been hit 78 times.
- Following installation on SH1 Rangiriri - Waikato, and SH3 Te Awamutu - Ōhaupō, both sites saw significant reductions in fatal and serious crashes.

Find out more

Find out more about Road to Zero and how we are making your roads safer at nzta.govt.nz/safety