

MASTERTON TO FEATHERSTON SPEED CONSULTATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why have you been reviewing the speed limits from Masterton to Featherston?

We have been reviewing speed limits on this section of State Highway 2 in Wairarapa to make it safer for all road users.

From January 2010 to December 2019, there were 488 reported crashes on this section of road. Four people were killed and 28 were seriously injured.

Deaths and serious injuries should not be tolerated – they are **not** inevitable. To reduce the number of people dying or being seriously injured on our roads, we're creating a safe system that is designed to account for human error – a system where people do not die or get seriously injured on the road when they make a mistake, or when someone else makes a mistake. **Making speeds safer is one part of the safe system and is something we can do quickly to make the roads safer for everyone.**

No matter what causes a crash, the speed at impact can be the difference between being killed, injured, or walking away unharmed. This is especially true when people who walk or bike are involved.

Having speed limits that are safe and appropriate is one of the most important ways we can help people get to where they need to go safely.

When speeds are safe for the road, simple mistakes don't need to end in tragedy. Speed reduces the opportunity to react to a mistake. The faster you're travelling, the less time you have to react to a mistake. As your speed increases:

the distance you need to stop increases

there is a greater probability that you will be going too fast if you meet an unexpected change in road conditions

there is a greater chance that other road users will misjudge how fast you are travelling.

**over a 10-year period, from 2010–2019. Data supplied by CAS (Crash Analysis System)*

What are the new permanent speed limits?

Following consultation with our iwi partners, key stakeholders, the community and other road users, the following speed limits have been set as the new permanent speed limits on State Highway 2 (SH2) between Masterton and Featherston:

Masterton:

260m east of William Donald Drive to 64m northeast of the existing 100/70 change point on the Waingawa River Bridge – 50km/h

64m northeast of the existing 100/70 change point on the Waingawa River Bridge to 220m southwest of Somerset Road – 80km/h

Carterton

240m southwest of Somerset Road to 205m southwest of Andersons Line – 70km/h

205m southwest of Andersons Line to 130m northeast of the SH2 / Belvedere Road / Park Road roundabout – 50km/h

130m northeast of the SH2 / Belvedere Road / Park Road roundabout to 10m south of Seddon Street – 40km/h

10m south of Seddon Street to 50m southwest of Portland Road (current 50/100 change point) – 50km/h

40m north of Richmond Road to 70m northeast of Moreton Road – 50 (30 school zone)

50m southwest of Portland Road to 550m north-east of Hupenui Road. Current passing lane becomes a slow vehicle lane with wide centreline – 80km/h

Greytown:

550m north-east of Hupenui Road to 50m north-east of North Street – 70km/h

50m north-east of North Street to 40m northeast of the SH2 / Kuratawhiti Street / Jellicoe Street intersection – 50km/h

40m northeast of the SH2 / Kuratawhiti Street / Jellicoe Street intersection to the SH2 / Wood Street / Church Street intersection – 40km/h

SH2 / Wood Street / Church Street intersection to 85m southwest of Bidwills Cutting Road – 50km/h

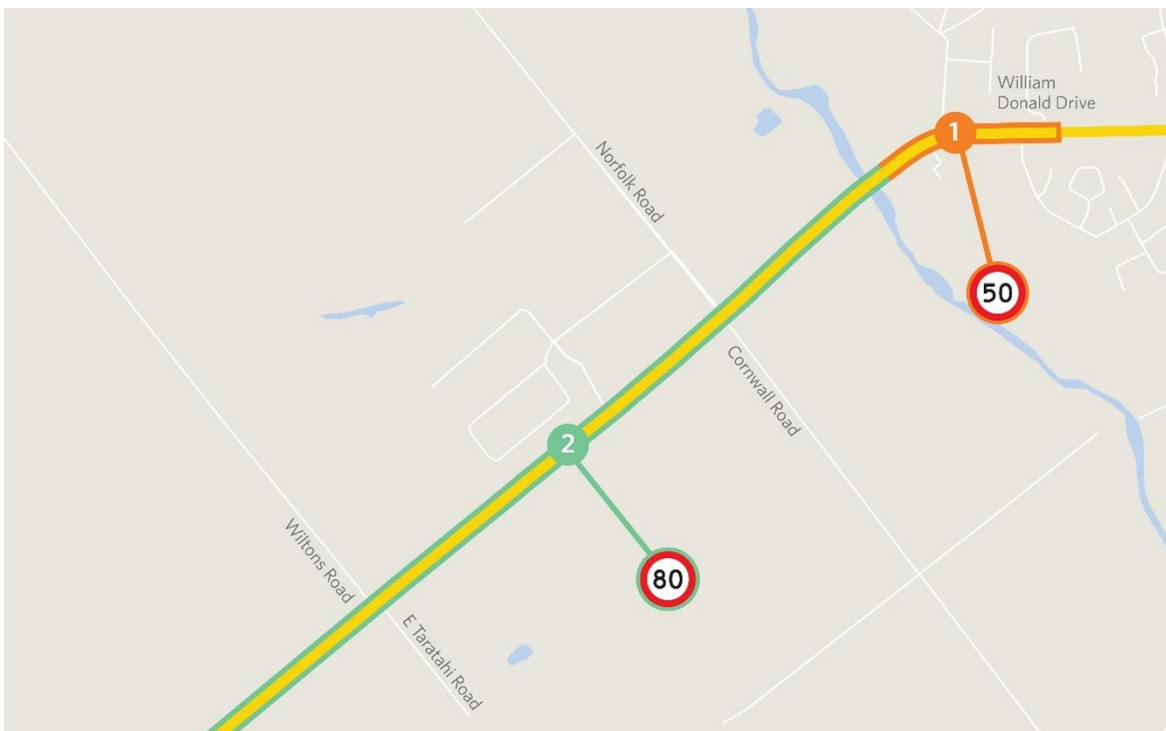
85m southwest of Bidwills Cutting Road to 35m east of Boundary Road. Current passing lanes become slow vehicle lanes with wide centreline – 80km/h

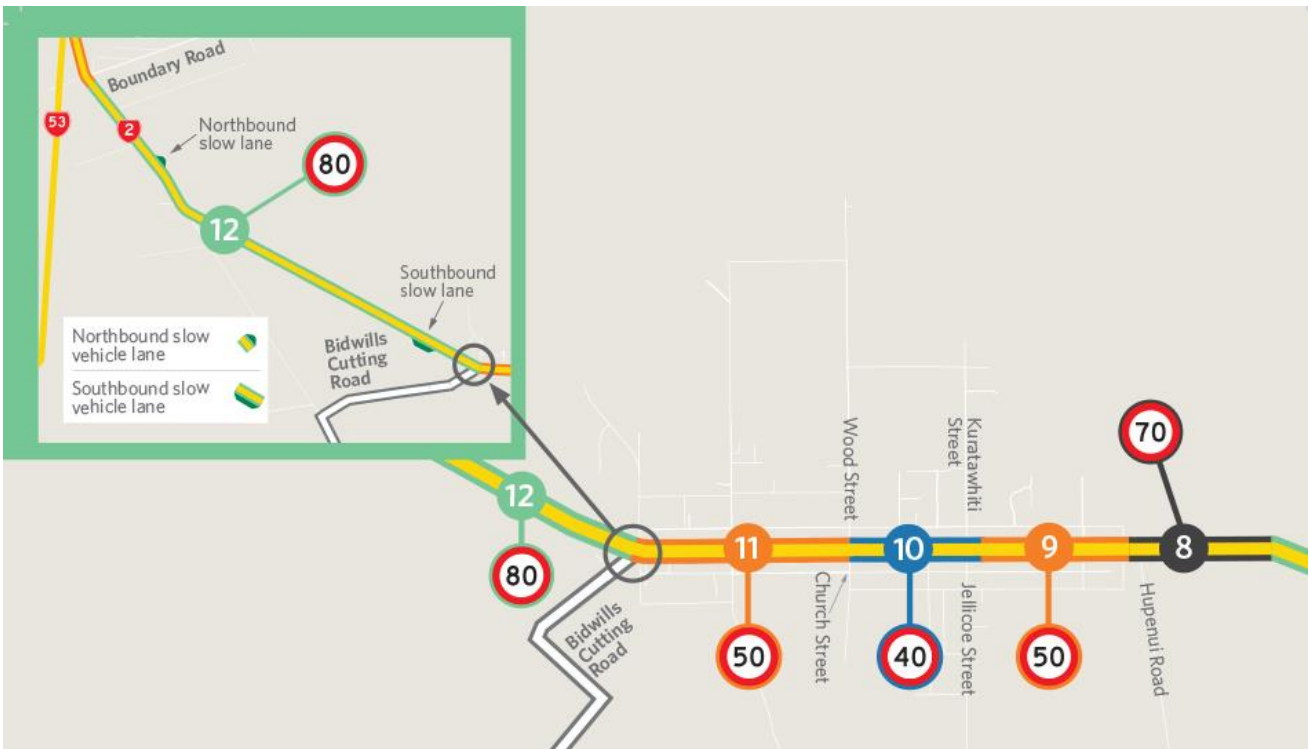
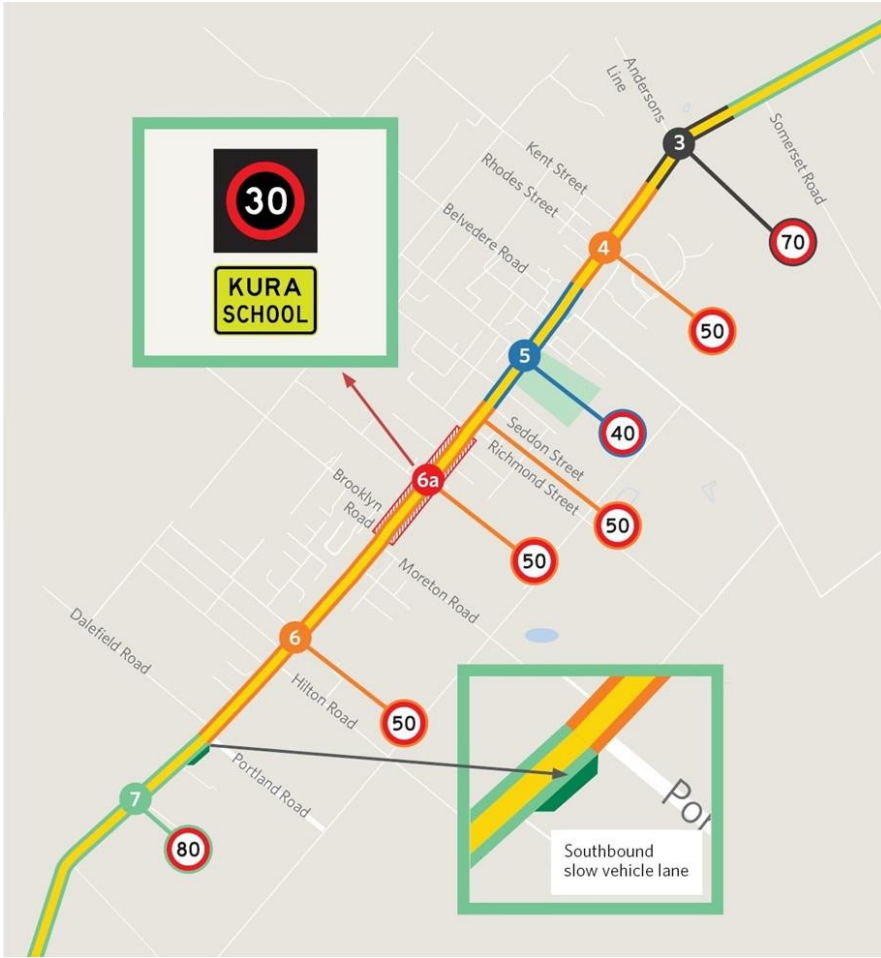
Featherston:

35m east of Boundary Road to 45m west of the SH2 / Birdwood Street / Lyon Street intersection – 50km/h

45m west of the SH2 / Birdwood Street / Lyon Street intersection to 30m west of the SH2 / Wakefield Street / Bethune Street intersection – 40km/h

30m west of the SH2 / Wakefield Street / Bethune Street intersection to 120m west of Renall Street – 50km/h







What is the timeline? When will changes be implemented?

We are implementing changes on SH2 from 27 January 2023. The public will be notified of the new permanent speed limits through the newspaper, on the radio, on the Waka Kotahi website, and on social media. In some areas between Masterton and Carterton we are constructing new roundabouts and adding safety barrier. In these areas the temporary traffic management speeds will remain in place until work is complete, then the new permanent speeds will be enforced.

How did you decide on the new speed limits?

Reviewing speed limits involves a number of steps, including technical assessments and consultation.

A technical assessment determines what a safe and appropriate speed for the road should be, and if it is out of step with current speed limits.

During the assessment, we looked at the previous crash history, the average speed people are travelling at, the number of cars and trucks using the road each day, what is happening around the road in terms of housing, urban development, businesses, and other activity on the road.

Was there consultation with road users and the public?

The setting of the permanent speed limits follows engagement with the Police, the AA, Councils and road user groups, before formal public consultation from July to September 2021. During this consultation stage, we ask the public and stakeholders for any additional information that might have an impact on our final decision.

A total of 1,308 pieces of feedback were received from stakeholder organisations and the public during the consultation period.

We consider any additional information gathered through consultation alongside our technical assessment to make a decision on the proposed speed limit changes.

It's important to note that consultation for proposed speed limit changes is not a vote – it's about seeking valuable local and community input so that we can consider wider factors and context in our decisions.

[Speed review process](#)

Setting new speed limits is a legal process, and Waka Kotahi, as a Road Controlling Authority (RCA), is responsible for setting new speed limits on New Zealand's state highways.

We follow the Speed Management Guide, which is a national framework that helps RCAs (Road Controlling Authority) make informed, accurate and consistent speed management decisions in their communities.

We also need to adhere to the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2017, which sets out the roles and responsibilities of the RCAs for reviewing and setting speed limits.

[Speed management guide](#)

[Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2017](#)

Won't lower speed limits harm the economy, especially for moving freight?

Each death and serious injury has a devastating and wide-reaching impact.

It also has a social cost to New Zealand of \$84 million per week, or nearly \$4.7 billion a year. That includes things like loss of life, quality of life, medical costs, legal costs and damages to vehicles.

So, while lower speed limits would have a small impact on travel time, this pales in comparison with the potential to save lives, prevent serious injuries and reduce the economic cost from crashes.

We commissioned a research project that found a drop in maximum speed travelled along certain routes from 100km/h to 80km/h increased travel times by around 10 percent and reduced fuel use by about 15 percent.

An earlier report studied the combined impacts of changes in mean speeds to road safety risk, travel times and fuel use for heavy vehicles. It concluded that the 'optimum' speed for heavy vehicles, taking these three factors into account, would be around 80km/h (Max Cameron, 2012).

Are you still going to change speed limits even if the public don't agree with it?

We're working toward a future where no-one is killed or seriously injured in road crashes in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We don't accept that serious crashes are just another part of road travel, nor that the loss of human life on our roads is a 'toll' we should pay as the price of being able to get around.

Too many of our whanau, friends and workmates are being killed or seriously injured on our roads and we know that speed is a key factor that determines if you or someone you love, lives or dies in a crash.

Our research shows that the people who respond to consultation only represent about 15% of the public, and that there is a significant silent majority that want us to improve road safety and save lives – they are just not always the ones quoted in the media.

Our consultation on proposed speed limit changes is not a vote. That's why we focus on the evidence behind the proposed changes and ask if there is any other information that should inform our final decision, instead of asking if people like it or not.

New Zealanders have accepted changes in the past - like wearing seatbelts and not smoking in some places – because we know it will make a difference and we know it is the right thing to do. It's time to do it again.

Is there an economic (including health) analysis that sits beside this proposal?

Speed management and its impact on aspects of economic and health are well documented to date.

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[Detailed summary of the social cost\(external link\)](#)

Why don't you invest more money in getting roads up to a higher standard?

Improving safety on New Zealand's roads is a priority for us. Making sure speeds are safe is one of the quickest and most effective ways we can prevent deaths and serious injuries. That's because our road network is long and covers some challenging terrain. It has many intersections and crashes are spread widely across the country.

Speed management is just one part of our investment programme to make New Zealand's most dangerous roads safer. In the Wairarapa we're also constructing new roundabouts and safety barriers and making changes to improve safety for people walking and on bikes.

What about driver frustration?

We understand the concern about driver frustration. There is a critical need to move freight, support industry and enable journeys that don't take all day, and we acknowledge there is a balance to be found.

Any proposal to drop speed limits is being driven by one objective – reducing harm and saving lives.

This isn't just about protecting drivers. The changes we are proposing are also about protecting passengers, the school kids crossing the road, the residents waiting for a bus, the motorcyclists without the same protection as someone in a car, and the many people who walk, run, cycle or scoot on our roads and footpaths.

What else are you doing about safety on roads in the Wairarapa?

We're delivering an infrastructure package on SH2 between Masterton and Carterton which includes three new roundabouts at high-risk intersections along the corridor:

SH2 and Ngaumutawa Road (improving safe access onto the heavy traffic bypass)

SH2 and Norfolk/Cornwall Roads

SH2 and Wiltons/East Taratahi Roads.

The project will also deliver central median wire-rope barriers, a safe turnaround area near the Clareville Saddlery/Hughes Line, and improved line marking and road surfacing along an 8.6km-long stretch of SH2.

Other initiatives include working with police, increasing investment on road maintenance and safety, and applying the safe system approach to ensure infrastructure and speed work together to improve safety.

We know there are other changes people want to see. Lowering speeds doesn't mean we can't make other changes, but it is one of the best things we can do now to prevent deaths and serious injuries on these roads.

Isn't it just bad drivers that are the problem?

Everyone makes mistakes, but simple mistakes shouldn't cost lives.

Whether we're late for work or dropping off the kids to school or sports or heading to the marae to see the whanau, everyday pressures can influence how we drive.

To make New Zealand's roads safer, we're working to improve every part of the transport system. That means safe drivers, safe roads, safe vehicles, and safe speeds.

Our research shows that travelling too fast for the conditions contributes to the cause of about a third of all fatal crashes. On the other hand, driving slowly is not a significant cause of our poor crash statistics.

The posted speed limit is a maximum not a target. Drivers are expected to show patience and adjust their speed depending on the conditions of the road and weather.

How will you know if this has been successful? What evidence do you have from similar programmes?

There are some great resources online:

[Road to Zero questions and answers](#)

[Driving safely – speed](#)