



12 December 2022

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Kia Ora Nicole

Consultation on the Interim State highway speed management plan 2023-24.

1. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Interim State highway speed management plan 2023-24*.
2. Rangitikei District Council used its Facebook page to alert residents in the Rangitikei District to this consultation, suggesting that they make direct submission through your online portal. We did this because particular consultation is overshadowed in the media by other reform proposals from the Government and because we are aware that the community often expects Council to be roading decisions within the District, including State Highways. We hope you get useful feedback from that initiative.
3. Council notes that your vision includes the commitment that 'our towns, cities and communities which currently have state highways running through them will experience less severance'. This is important for Rangitikei, where most of the towns have state highways running through them. Further consideration is needed on the impact of the state highways in locations outside the strict (or historic) urban boundaries as well as within the towns themselves. We comment on this later in this submission (paras 8-11).
4. We agree that everyone has a shared responsibility for improving road safety. However, improving safety design and maintenance of state highways is *solely* the responsibility of Waka Kotahi. The objective to have posted speed limits on the state highway network that match their safe and appropriate speed seems to overlook this critical role. We hope that Waka Kotahi is more specific about the intended work programme for safety design and maintenance as the speed management plan is developed for subsequent periods; later in this submission (para. 12) we offer some specific suggestions for that, to be associated with the proposed intersection speed zones.

5. We expect that you are aware of the view expressed by Local Government New Zealand that there is a need for a broader suite of changes beyond infrastructure maintenance/renewals and road safety signage – in particular, driver education and investment in campaigns around drunk driving/driving under the influence of drugs. This is clearly a shared responsibility between Waka Kotahi and the Police. This should also be clearly stated in speed management plans for subsequent periods – its potential impact is wider than just the state highways.
6. Council is pleased that the emphasis in this interim speed management plan is to improve safety around rural schools. We support the proposed implementation of 30 km/h variable speed limits outside those schools in the Rangitīkei District which have frontage to a state highway – i.e. Turakina, Bulls and Mangaweka. While the schools in Bulls and Mangaweka have a main frontage through side streets, Council has had feedback in support of the proposed variable speed limit from the principals of both schools. We expect that you will engage with each school so that the placement of the signs best meets their needs. Council will look to replicate such lower speed limits for schools which have frontage to local roads – with the first priority being for schools on arterial routes (such as South Makirikiri School, at the intersection of Union Line and Makirikiri Road).
7. We note that this interim speed management plan does not otherwise change speed limits on either of the state highways which traverse the Rangitīkei District. Both are major routes, for both cars and trucks, and our view is that the current speed limits outside urban areas are generally reasonable, given that Waka Kotahi has invested considerably in safety measures including frequent passing lanes. However, as foreshadowed above (para. 3), there are several specific instances which we wish to highlight.
8. We think there is a need to extend lower speed limits 2 km south of Taihape to Winiata Marae, i.e. beyond the intersection of state highway 1 with Rauma Road (which has St Josephs School) and Mangaone Valley Road. This would also improve safety for accessing the Taihape cemetery. The Taihape Community Board has recommended to Council that the speed limit be reduced to 50 km/h: we suggest further dialogue between Council and Waka Kotahi to determine what the appropriate lower limit is, but it should not exceed 70 km/h.
9. Council also considers that a joint study with Waka Kotahi over traffic in Bulls is urgently needed. The safety of children attending Bulls School is just one aspect. The intersection between State Highway 1 and State Highway 3 has the further complication of logging trucks approaching from the south through High Street. Navigating that intersection is difficult and relies heavily on courtesy from other road

users, many of whom are focussed on their own manoeuvres. The BP service station and retail at 'Rangitikei Junction' with the Mobil service station nearly opposite creates congestion, and Council's new community centre, Te Matapihi, while just off State Highway 1 in Criterion Street, will be adding vehicle numbers. We think a joint study, involving representatives from the community, local businesses and trucking firms, would be the best way of reaching the safest and most efficient solution.

10. We have become aware, through our Facebook page, of concerns about safety in Mangaweka. However, before committing to a joint study in this town, we suggest Waka Kotahi discusses this with the Police to ascertain the degree of speed limit enforcement over the last two or three years. Council would like to be involved in that discussion.
11. In addition, Council is concerned that no action has been taken to address pedestrian safety between the Taihape CBD and Otaihape Valley Road, where the bridge over the railway forces pedestrians to walk on the road. This is dangerous.
12. Referring to our earlier comment about improving safety design (para. 4) we think consideration should be given to installing roundabouts at key intersections between arterial routes maintained by the Council and state highways. We specifically suggest that this would be appropriate at the following:
 - Wellington Road and State Highway 1
 - Makirikiri Road and State Highway 1
 - Kakariki Road and State Highway 1
 - Calico Line and State Highway 1
 - Makirikiri Road and State Highway 3
 - Wanganui Road and State Highway 3

These would be managed through a lower (80 km/h) speed limit before the intersection, except the last which is already in a 70 km/h area. Council would reflect that on the arterial routes leading to those intersections.

13. Council hopes these comments are helpful.

Ngā mihi



Andy Watson
Mayor of the Rangitikei District

Making this place home.