

Speed Limit Reviews – Mangawhai – Kaiwaka West

Meeting: Council Briefing
Date of meeting: 02 September 2020
Reporting officer: Shawn Baker, Speed Limits Project Manager

Purpose/Ngā whāinga

To update Council on the review of speed limits within the Mangawhai and Kaiwaka West review areas and obtain direction on the proposed Hearings format.

Context/Horopaki

Council, in its capacity of Road Controlling Authority is reviewing speed limits across the Kaipara District as part of central governments Road to Zero Road Safety Strategy. The review process is being led by the Northland Transportation Alliance and has a goal of setting safe and appropriate speed limits that will reduce fatal and serious injury crashes.

The Speed Limits Bylaw 2018 sets the speed limits within Kaipara District. The Bylaw is made under Section 22AD of the Land Transport Act 1998. In making a speed limits bylaw, Council, in its capacity as a Road Controlling Authority must comply with the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017 which sets out the process and the matters that must be considered in setting a speed limit.

When setting a speed limit, one aspect that Council must consider is feedback from the affected community. This is achieved by a consultation process that is consistent with the requirements of Section 156 of the Local Government Act.

Discussion/Ngā kōrerorero

Northland Transportation Alliance is leading a regionwide review of speed limits. The review prioritises high benefit roads where the evidence suggests that a lower speed limit would result in a significant improvement to road safety.

To ensure that the review process is made in a timely manner, but also remains manageable within Council's resources, a catchment-based approach has been taken. High benefit roads are identified using a nationally consistent assessment process. Once identified, a larger catchment area around these roads are identified to form the overall review area.

The Mangawhai – Kaiwaka area has seven roads that have been identified as high benefit. This includes the Kaiwaka-Mangawhai Road. The resulting review area is set out in the attached Draft Statement of Proposal. In addition, an area to the west of Kaiwaka has also been included in the current review for consistency.

Draft Statement of Proposal

A Draft Statement of Proposal (SOP) has been attached to this briefing paper to enable Councillors to discuss the proposed speed limits prior to adoption for consultation at the 30th September Council meeting.

The Draft SOP provides all of the information required for the community to make a reasonably informed submission. The Draft SOP also provides members of the community direction for additional, more technical background information.

The Draft SOP identifies the review area and the proposed new speed limits in map form. In addition, each road within the review area is identified in table form, and both the current speed limit and the proposed speed limit is also identified in that table.

Assessment Criteria

One of the aims of the review process is to identify evidence based safe and appropriate speed limits. The limits are based on recorded crash history, risk assessment and the wider road environment.

It is also important that proposed speed limits are consistent so that the speed limit on one road is similar to that of another road that has the same look and feel. To achieve consistency, the NTA is leading a regional programme of speed reviews, of which the Mangawhai-Kaiwaka and Kaiwaka West Review is part of. Assessing and setting speed limits is guided by National Speed Management Guidance.

The Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017 identifies a range of matters that the Road Controlling Authority must consider and assess when proposing a new speed limit, including:

- The wider road environment
- The safe design speed of the road
- Adjacent land-uses
- What the road is used for.

When making final decisions, all the matters set out in the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017, including public feedback will be considered and presented to Council. The detailed technical assessments that have been undertaken will be made available as additional information on Councils website as part of the community engagement process.

Community Engagement

The Speed Limits Bylaw is made by Council in its capacity as a Road Controlling Authority. Unlike many other Bylaws that are made under the Local Government Act, speed limits must be consistent with the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017 and the relevant national speed management guidance and engineering standards. This requirement is to ensure a high level of road safety and national consistency of speed limits.

Section 2.5 of the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017 identifies the groups and organisations that must be consulted before setting a new speed limit. This includes any local communities that may be affected by the proposed speed limit. Consultation must be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Section 156 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Given the large area covered by the review; the changes proposed; and community interest; it is proposed to consult in accordance with the Special Consultative Procedures set out in Section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002. This will be given effect to by:

- Directly notifying statutory consultees as set out in Section 2.5 of the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017, as well as key stakeholders, as identified by Council and Section 22AD (3) of the Land Transport Act 1998.
- Public notice will be placed in media with the information able to be viewed at Council service centres.
- The Statement of Proposal, along with detailed technical review information will be made available on council's website
- Where appropriate, public information sessions will be organised (subject to any Covid-19 restrictions that may be in place).

Council is required to ensure that there is reasonable opportunity for persons to present their views to Council in a manner that is appropriate to the preferences and needs of those persons.

Although Council must consider community feedback on proposed speed limits; the final decisions on speed limits must be evidence based. However, community feedback may lead Council to upgrade a road to meet the standards of a specific speed limit, or to undertake other measures to mitigate speed related risks. In some cases, there may be a range of speed limit options that maintain consistency with speed management guidance.

Community Engagement Experience to Date

The Mangawhai-Kaiwaka and Kaiwaka West Speed Limits Review is the third major speed review led by Northland Transportation Alliance. In addition, a smaller review was previously undertaken on Tara Road in Mangawhai.

Community feedback on other speed limit reviews has been positive with the vast majority of submissions either supporting the proposals or seeking even lower speed limits. With some exceptions, submissions that were opposed to lower speed limits were often general in nature and lacked any evidence or reasons for the opposition.

The recent speed review undertaken in the Whangarei District (Waipu, Marsden Point and Vinegar Hill) generated 107 submissions. A review in Far North District (Waimate-Okaihau-Kaeo) generated 178 submissions.

It is anticipated that the Mangawhai-Kaiwaka and Kaiwaka West review will generate between 150 and 200 submissions.

Submission Period and Hearings

The community feedback process includes a submission period, which is normally 4 weeks. Any hearings that are required can be held approximately 2 weeks after the close of submissions.

NTA staff require three to four weeks to ensure the notification process is complete and all information is available to the community, including the location and timing of any drop-in information sessions. The following dates will therefore be proposed for the submissions and hearings:

- Submissions open: 29th October 2020
- Submissions close: 27th November 2020
- Hearings: Week of the 14th to 18th December 2020 – it is noted that there is a full Council meeting scheduled for 16th December. Hearings could be scheduled for the afternoon of the Council meeting.

The above dates will need to be confirmed at Councils meeting on 30th September, when the Draft Statement of Proposal is adopted for consultation purposes. Council will also need to determine whether full Council wish to hear submissions, or whether Council will delegate that authority to a hearings panel.

It should be noted that the above dates may change if Northland's Covid-19 Alert level changes.

Staff request direction from Council as to the make-up of the hearings panel and the timing of any hearings.

Next steps/E whaiake nei

An Agenda item will be presented to the 30th September Council meeting. This Agenda item will ask Council to approve the Draft Statement of Proposal for consultation. In approving the Draft SOP for consultation, Council will also be asked to confirm dates for the submission period and any hearings that may be required.

Following the submission period and Hearings, NTA staff will review all submissions received and make recommendations based on all the assessment criteria set out in the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017, including public feedback.

If Council adopts the final recommendations, staff will prepare a programme to make appropriate changes to signage and prepare the required changes to the Speed Limits Bylaw for final adoption.

Attachments/Ngā tapiritanga

	Title
A	Draft Statement of Proposal - Mangawhai-Kaiwaka and Kaiwaka West Speed Limit Review