

Statement of Proposal

Speed Limits Amendment Bylaw 2022

Introduction

Auckland Transport (“AT”) is proposing the Speed Limits Amendment Bylaw 2022 to amend its Speed Limits Bylaw 2019 and set new permanent or variable speed limits for over 800 roads (of over 14,000) across Auckland, with these new limits to come into force on 31 May 2022 for most of the proposed roads, and 13 June 2022 for roads associated with schools to allow changes to be made at the start of the school week. AT is seeking feedback on this proposal following the Special Consultative Procedure of the Local Government Act, 2002.

This Statement of Proposal sets out background information around the proposal, details of what is being proposed, reasons for the proposal, how submissions on the proposal may be made and how long the consultation period will run for.

Background

AT is the road controlling authority for all roads within the Auckland transport system. Generally, this is the local road network which includes public roads and beaches but excludes State highways for which Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) has responsibility.

Reviewing and ensuring that speed limits across Auckland are set at speeds that are appropriate for road function, safety, design and use is one of the key measures that AT is undertaking to improve safety on Auckland’s roads. Setting safe and appropriate speed limits will contribute to a reduction in deaths and serious injuries on our roads and ensure speed limit consistency on the network.

Setting safe and appropriate speed limits also supports AT’s Vision Zero approach (adopted by the AT Board in September 2019), which provides that no deaths or serious injuries are acceptable while travelling on our transport network. We’re human and make mistakes every day and those mistakes should not result in loss of life or limb.

AT controls more than 7,300 kilometres of roads and is working through a multi-year programme (the Safe Speeds Programme) to review all speed limits across its network. Speed limits must be reviewed and set (by bylaw) in accordance with the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2017 (“the Rule”). In line with government strategy and legislation, AT is prioritising high risk roads for review.

Previously AT made the Speed Limits Bylaw 2019 (under the Land Transport Act 1998) which set new speed limits for the highest risk roads following AT’s first tranche of speed limit reviews. Within this first tranche, speed limits were reviewed on around 10% of the local road network. Where new safe and appropriate speed limits were required to be set, these came into effect from mid-2020 to mid-2021. On 30 June 2020 speed limits were changed within the city centre, residential areas in Te Atatū South and Rosehill in Papakura, plus many high risk urban and rural roads. Speed limits in a number of town centres were changes in stages from August 2020 to June 2021.

AT is now proposing further speed limit changes for a number of roads across Auckland after reviewing and finding that their current speed limits are not safe and appropriate. This is part of the second tranche of reviews under the Safe Speeds Programme.

To change the speed limits as currently proposed, AT will need to amend the Speed Limits Bylaw 2019. The draft Speed Limits Amendment Bylaw 2022 sets out the changes proposed to be made to the Speed Limits Bylaw 2019.

The Proposal

AT is proposing the Speed Limits Amendment Bylaw 2022 to amend the Speed Limits Bylaw 2019 (“the 2019 bylaw”) and set new safe and appropriate speed limits for 823 roads across Auckland with a total length of 614km (approximately 8% of the road network), with these new limits to come into force on 31 May 2022 for the majority of roads, and 13 June 2022 for roads associated with schools, allowing for school speed changes to be made at the start of a school week.

The schedules in the 2019 bylaw proposed to be amended are as follows:

- Schedule 2: Roads within the urban traffic areas (other than in a designated location) where a permanent speed limit other than 50km/h is set by this amendment bylaw
- Schedule 3: Roads outside the urban traffic areas (other than in a designated location) where a permanent speed limit other than 100km/h is set by this amendment bylaw
- Schedule 6: Roads that have a variable speed limit set by this amendment bylaw
- Schedule 7: Current speed limits set again by this amendment bylaw
- Schedule 8: Existing speed limits set under a previous bylaw that continue in force

The following schedules are not proposed to be amended:

- Schedule 1: Urban traffic areas
- Schedule 4: Roads within designated locations where a speed limit is set by this amendment bylaw
- Schedule 5: Roads that have a holiday speed limit set by this amendment bylaw

A full copy of the Speed Limits Amendment Bylaw 2022 is attached and forms part of this Statement of Proposal. A copy of the 2019 bylaw can be accessed at:

<https://at.govt.nz/media/1984176/speed-limits-bylaw-2019-as-at-oct-2020-compressed.pdf>

Reasons for the Proposal

The current speed limits on many Auckland local roads are not suitable for the existing conditions. The consequences of small driver errors on these roads can be fatal. This is considered a significant contributor to death and serious injuries (DSI), which strongly suggests that the current road environment and design of Auckland roads are not designed in such a way that the posted speed limit is the safe driving speed.

To tackle the problem of increasing deaths and serious injuries on Auckland’s roads, AT is working through a multi-year programme to review speed limits for all of Auckland’s roads under its control and setting safe and appropriate speed limits. This programme forms part of AT’s Vision Zero strategy.

Speed determines both the likelihood of a crash occurring and the severity of the outcome. Regardless of what causes a crash, whether people walk away or are carried away will depend on the speed their vehicles are travelling.

It is not just about keeping the driver and passengers of a car safe. While modern cars have improved safety features, if we crash into vulnerable road users at speeds higher than 30km/h, the risk of them dying or being seriously injured increases substantially.

Our crash statistics show 70% of all Auckland region death and serious injuries in 2020 occurred on 50km/h local urban roads and 57% of all fatalities were vulnerable road users, i.e. those not within a vehicle. This may, in part, be Covid-19 lockdown related with less driving and potentially more walking and cycling and is consistent with national and international trends where improved vehicle technologies and infrastructure improvements have been more successful in protecting those inside vehicles than out.

The police traffic crash reports indicate that speeding was a factor in 51% of road deaths in 2020.

Public sentiment

Almost one-year since the speed limit changes on 30 June 2020, Kantar has independently surveyed public attitudes towards speed reductions with results reported in May 2021.

The focus was to check the pulse on how Aucklanders felt about speed limit changes, whether they understood the relation between safe and appropriate speed limits and reducing road trauma and to gauge their level of support for proposed future speed limit changes.

Overall support for speed changes remains high, with less than 33% of those surveyed being unsupportive.

A refreshed safe speeds communications, marketing and media campaign is launching in July/August 2021 to boost awareness of the link between speed and road trauma.

Urban residents and those commuting by active modes, such as walking or cycling, or public transport are most supportive of speed limit reductions. Awareness of speed changes is higher in rural or semi-rural areas, but support lower.

Reasons for not being supportive included specific road speeds being seen as too low, travel time concerns and vehicle drivers being seen as the core safety issue not speed limits.

Reasons for support included improved safety, lower crash risk, cyclist and pedestrian safety, plus road speed limits being too high for the conditions.

There is continued strong support for speed reductions near schools, kindergartens and community facilities (78%), town centres (64%), urban areas (66%), with support slightly reducing from 2020 for high-risk rural roads (63%) and winding / hill rural roads (61%) but still remaining high.

Speed limit reviews

AT has undertaken a review of existing speed limits across Auckland, focusing on the high-risk roads across the Auckland transport system road network.

As required by the Rule, speed limits have been reviewed with regard to:

- information and guidance from Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi), including Waka Kotahi's Speed Management Guide (November 2016);
- the function and use of the road;
- crash risk for all road users;
- the characteristics of the road and roadsides;
- adjacent land use;
- number of intersections and property access ways;
- traffic volume;
- any planned modification to the road; and
- the views of interested persons and groups.

In summary, the findings of the review identified that many posted speed limits are not currently set at the safe and appropriate speed limits for those roads. AT is proposing to set new speed limits in response to these findings.

AT proposes to introduce new speed limits on a further 614km of the local road network, which includes high risk roads and nearby roads for a cohesive approach. This is to align with the one network approach and allows for the implementation of a consistent treatment across the road network based on the following type of areas, rural roads, urban roads, town centre, City Centre and residential roads. This is to design treatments specifically to reduce crash types that occur in each of the road types.

AT considered whether treatment options such as 'engineering up' the roads could be taken to achieve travel speeds that are safe and appropriate on the roads and found that due to the

physical nature of the roads and the substantial costs that would be involved, taking such other measures is not viable in the circumstances.

Further details on the application and cost of 'engineering up' roads, with particular relevance to rural areas, is discussed within the Options Considered section below.

According to the Rule, where an existing speed limit is found not to be safe and appropriate and there are considered to be no other measures that can be taken to achieve travel speeds that are safe and appropriate on the road, the only other option available to road controlling authorities is to set a new safe and appropriate speed limit for the road.

According to the 2017 Rule, a road controlling authority (such as AT) may only set speed limits (other than temporary or emergency speed limits) and designate an urban traffic area by making a bylaw. The proposed amendment bylaw is needed to introduce the new speed limits that AT considers appropriate following its review of existing speed limits.

AT's review assessment for each of the roads within this amendment bylaw and more detailed information on the matters that were considered in deciding to propose the new speed limits can be accessed at [\[insert weblink once available\]](#) and copies are available on request to ATSpeedProgramme@at.govt.nz.

Options considered

On finding that an existing speed limit is not safe and appropriate, AT has two options under the Rule – to either: (i) set a new speed limit that it considers to be safe and appropriate for that road; or (ii) take other measures to achieve travel speeds that are safe and appropriate on that road. Retaining the existing speed limit is not a legal option.

Option 1: Keep the existing speed limits for each of the roads by taking other measures to achieve travel speeds that are safe and appropriate on them

For each of the roads within this amendment bylaw, AT found on review that their existing speed limits are not safe and appropriate. According to the Rule, AT must therefore either change the speed limits to a safe and appropriate level or take other measures to achieve travel speeds that are safe and appropriate on each of the roads. AT has concluded in each case that taking other measures in order to achieve safe and appropriate speeds on each of the roads at their existing speed limits is not a viable option.

Engineering up of the roads is considered undesirable and unnecessary. The cost to engineer up a road corridor is substantially expensive and therefore typically reserved for economically important roads (such as state highways, expressways, key freight routes) that have a strong case for investment to bring the road corridor up to the required standard to enable safe travel speeds at the current speed limit.

For example, a rural road with an assessed safe and appropriate speed of 60km/h could be engineered up to a safe and appropriate speed of 80km/h. To achieve this may require one of more of the following engineering interventions: median &/or roadside safety barriers, wide centreline marking, road widening &/or shoulder widening, roundabout installation or other intersection improvements.

Based upon assessed economics from Waka Kotahi, typical intervention costs for rural roads is:

- Median and roadside safety barriers - \$2m to \$5m per km
- Median barrier only - \$1m to \$4m per km
- Wide centreline - \$250k to \$1.5m per km
- Targeted shoulder widening - \$200k to \$450k per site

Within Auckland it is noted that project costs are at the higher end of the Waka Kotahi scale, or above the maximum value, due to narrow rural road corridors which do not provide the

available width to install barriers without road widening. Therefore, as noted above, engineering up is typically reserved for economically important roads.

In urban areas such as town centres and residential areas with a high number of people walking and cycling, AT seeks to set a speed that is survivable in the event of a crash. This survivable speed limit is typically not the existing speed limit, therefore engineering up may require complete segregation of traffic modes which is not viable.

AT considers that taking other measures such as engineering up of these roads to achieve travel speeds that are safe and appropriate is not desirable or necessary. There is also existing community support for lower speed limits on high risk roads.

For these reasons AT considers that keeping the existing speed limits is not a viable option.

Option 2: Set new speed limits that are considered to be safe and appropriate for each of the roads

Each segment of each road within this amendment bylaw can be categorised as either town centre, urban, residential, rural or associated with a school. The sections below outline the setting new safe and appropriate speed limits by category:

Town centres

Introduce 30km/h speed limits within town centres, as listed in Schedule 2 of the proposed amendment bylaw.

The reasons for treating the town centres include:

- Making a safer environment where there are high numbers of vulnerable road users
- Reduce speed limits to survivable levels recognising that many users share the same space
- Existing operating (actual) speeds are normally lower than posted speeds during peak periods due to the high volume of foot traffic, and
- The strong level of community support for safe and appropriate speeds in town centre areas, with 2 in 3 people surveyed in both 2020 and 2021 supportive.

Urban roads

Designate new urban traffic areas within which roads will have a speed limit of 50km/h unless specifically set at a different limit as listed in schedule 1 of the proposed amendment bylaw. The new urban traffic areas consider recent changes in the area, such as new developments.

Reduction of 70km/h speed limits to a safe speed limit for the road environment.

Residential zones

Introduce a 30km/h speed limit for the roads as listed in Schedule 2 of the proposed amendment bylaw. The residential zones will:

- Reduce speed limits to survivable levels recognising that many road users share the same space
- Provide a more people focused street where families feel safer
- Recognise that residential roads are becoming increasingly busy as traffic levels increase, and more people choose to walk or cycle, and
- Introduce area-wide changes rather than individual streets as they are part of a larger road network.

For the residential areas where speed limits have been reduced under the first tranche of the Safe Speeds Programme, there is strong positive feedback on the safety improvements¹.

Rural roads

¹ <https://at.govt.nz/media/1984846/at-road-safety-perceptions-survey-papakura-and-te-atatu-2020.pdf>

Introduce safe speed limits of 40km/h, 60km/h or 80km/h on rural roads as listed in schedules 2, 3 and 6 of the proposed amendment bylaw. Rural roads will:

- Focus on high crash risk routes
- Support the need to introduce safe and appropriate speeds across areas rather than individual roads, and
- Make key routes safer with no speed limits greater than 80km/h without a centre median separation.

Schools

Introduce safe speed limits of 30km/h around schools, as listed in Schedule 2 of the proposed amendment bylaw. Safe school speed limits will:

- Reduce speed limits to survivable levels around schools recognising that many road users share the same space
- Provide more people focused areas around schools, where families feel safer and children feel able to travel to and from school grounds with lower risk
- Recognise that roads connecting to schools are becoming increasingly busy as traffic levels increase, and more people choose to walk or cycle
- The strong level of community support for safe and appropriate speeds near schools, kindergartens, or other community facilities, with a consistent 78% of people surveyed in both 2020 and 2021 supportive, and
- Introduce area-wide changes rather than individual streets as they are part of a larger road network.

Common changes

For all categories, schedules 7 and 8 are amended as required to facilitate the changes above.

Preferred Option

Setting new speed limits for each of the roads is considered viable and appropriate in the circumstances.

Given that, for each of the roads, taking other measures such as engineering up to achieve safe and appropriate travel speeds on the road (Option 1) is considered not to be viable in the circumstances, the only other option available under the Rule is to set a new speed limit for each road that AT considers to be safe and appropriate for that road.

An independent assessment of the AT's speed limit technical reviews for Tranche 2A has been undertaken by transportation consultants Abley Limited. The independent assessment found *"...Tranche 2A to be a robust and well thought out stage of the Safe Speed Programme, with strong alignment to strategic documents and a methodology and application that is reasonably consistent with industry and AT processes."*

AT has therefore decided to propose new permanent or variable speed limits for each of the roads at the safe and appropriate speed limit identified through the reviews.

It is proposed that these new speed limits come into effect on 31 May 2022 for the majority of roads, and 13 June 2022 for roads associated with schools as this date is within the school holiday period. This will allow sufficient time to undertake public consultation, analyse all the feedback, report the responses to the AT Board with a recommendation and if approved, the procurement and installation of the new speed limit signs.

AT now wants your feedback

Before making any final decisions on the proposed speed limit changes and amendments to the bylaw, AT wants your input.

You can give us feedback from **<TBC> 2021 until <TBC> 2021**

How to give feedback:

- Completing an online survey by going to [AT.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://at.govt.nz/haveyoursay)
 - Click on 'Proposed speed limit changes' <TBC>
 - Then click on the 'have your say' link
- Completing a hardcopy feedback form available at local libraries and service centres and return to us via FreePost.
- Calling AT. If you need assistance completing the feedback form, please call us on (09) 355 3553 and our contact centre staff will fill in the feedback form with you over the phone.
- In person at drop-in sessions:
 - <TBC>
- Those who wish to present their views in person will be given the opportunity to be heard by a hearings panel. If you would like to present your views in person or via an audio/audio visual link, please email ATspeedprogramme@AT.govt.nz or call 09 355 3553 to book a time slot. The hearings will be held on <TBC> at 20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland.

For any queries, please contact ATSpeedProgramme@at.govt.nz.