



Northern Corridor Improvements Project Speed Review

Community consultation summary

March 2024

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1. Background

As part of the work undertaken by the Northern Corridor Improvements (NCI) project, we asked for feedback on proposed speed limits in two areas. These reflect changes to the road network to increase efficiency and safety for road users.

SH18 Caribbean Drive to Albany Highway section (eastbound and westbound)

As part of NCI, several changes to State Highway 18 have been undertaken during construction (2018 – 2023) including:

- The removal of local road access from Unsworth Drive along the stretch of SH18 between Caribbean Drive and Albany Highway.
- New median and side barriers.
- The opening of the new eastbound offramp at Paul Matthews Road.
- Design upgrades to the eastbound onramp at Albany Highway; and
- A new westbound onramp.

These changes improve the safety for road users travelling along this section. As a result, the road environment can support a higher speed without compromising safety.

NZTA proposed the following speed limit changes in this area.

Location	Current speed limit	Proposed speed limit
SH18 (eastbound) – between Albany Highway and the SH18-SH1 link	80km/h	100km/h
SH18 (westbound) – between Caribbean Drive and Albany Highway	80km/h	100km/h

The proposed speed limit changes would also make the speed in these sections consistent with the rest of SH18 which is currently 100km/h from the west of Albany Highway. They include the eastbound on ramp and from SH18 at Albany Highway to the off ramp at Paul Matthews Road/Caribbean Drive, and the westbound on ramp from Caribbean Drive to Albany Highway.

Upper Harbour Highway - Constellation Drive offramp to Caribbean Drive

The short (less than 400m) section of Upper Harbour Highway between the SH1 Constellation Drive northbound offramp and Caribbean Drive has undergone significant change from the upgrades implemented. Construction of the new shared path supports people travelling on foot or by bike between their community and the transport hub of Constellation Station - or further afield.

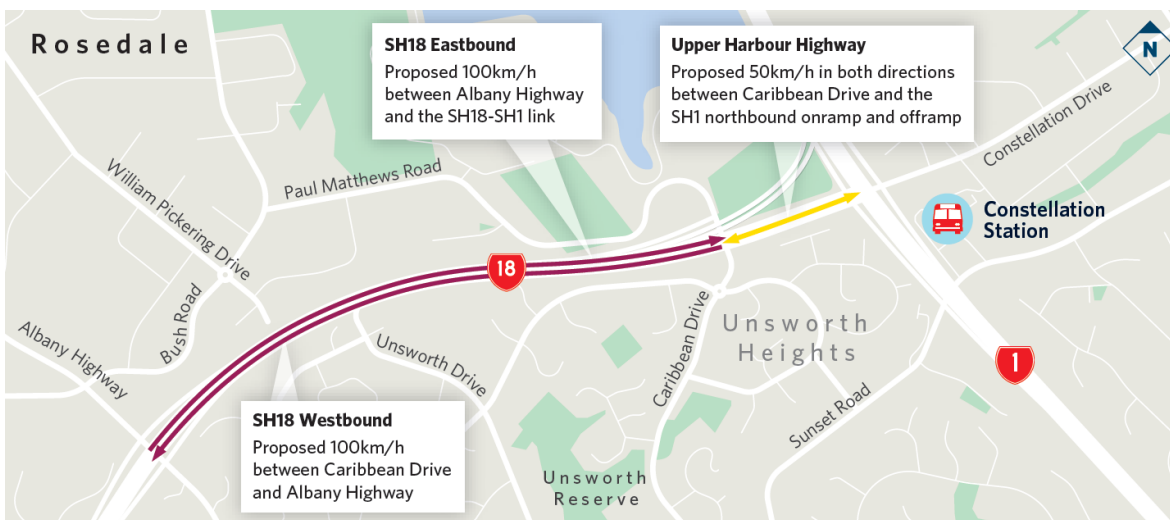
This busy and complex signalised interchange now stretches from the SH18 offramp at Paul Matthews Road across to Caribbean Drive and along to the SH1 on and offramps at Constellation Drive.

This urbanised section of road now supports a range of people travelling on foot, bike or in a vehicle.

To support the changes in this area, NZTA proposed to reduce the speed limit on this section from 80km/h to 50km/h.

Location	Current speed limit	Proposed speed limit
Upper Harbour Highway (both directions) – between Caribbean Drive and the SH1 northbound on & offramp	80km/h	50km/h

This proposed speed limit change will also make the speed in this section consistent with the urbanised area east of Constellation Drive off ramp which is 50km/h.



Proposed speed changes.

2. Consultation process

Prior to undertaking the formal consultation process, we completed numerous steps.

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

Before we spoke with the community about speed on SH1 and SH18, we undertook a technical assessment of this road. This included confirmation of the speeds which informed the Design Philosophy for Geometric Design of the NCI project and Safe and Appropriate Speed Assessments for the transit corridor and the section of the reconfigured interchange connecting the motorway to the local roading network. This included the identification of the optimum locations for speed change points, reflected the One Network Framework classifications, and the speed limits on adjoining roads. The speeds consulted upon reflect the safe and appropriate for the current road characteristics and roadside environments as assessed.

ENGAGEMENT PHASE

As part of our ongoing engagement with Mana Whenua on the project we discussed the speed limit changes with Mana Whenua at the Integrated Iwi Group, first in August 2022, and then in March 2023 when preparing for formal consultation. Mana Whenua were broadly supportive of the changes proposed and this was noted in the meeting minutes. Key stakeholders were also briefed on the proposal prior to the consultation phase.

CONSULTATION PHASE

The engagement phase took place with a formal consultation survey from Wednesday 30 August to Wednesday 27 September 2023.

Consultation materials showed the proposed safe and appropriate speed limits to improve the safety for road users travelling along two sections of SH1 and SH18.

Consultation material included information on the project webpage, e-newsletter, and email to stakeholders.

Submissions were able to be accepted via email to the NZTA project inbox, via the project phone number, and via the online survey on the project webpage. For this consultation, all submissions were received via the online survey.

3. Consultation Question

The purpose of formal consultation is to share a detailed proposal with people and to ask for any additional information that might have an impact on the final decision.

In proposing new speed limits, we asked:

1. To support the changes in this area, Waka Kotahi proposed to increase the speed limit on this less than 400m section from 80km/h to 100km/h.

Location	Current speed limit	Proposed speed limit
SH18 (eastbound) – between Albany Highway and the SH18-SH1 link	80km/h	100km/h
SH18 (westbound) – between Caribbean Drive and Albany Highway	80km/h	100km/h

‘Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?’

2. To support the changes in this area, Waka Kotahi proposed to reduce the speed limit on this less than 400m section from 80km/h to 50km/h.

Location	Current speed limit	Proposed speed limit
Upper Harbour Highway (both directions) – between Caribbean Drive and the SH1 northbound on & offramp	80km/h	50km/h

‘Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?’

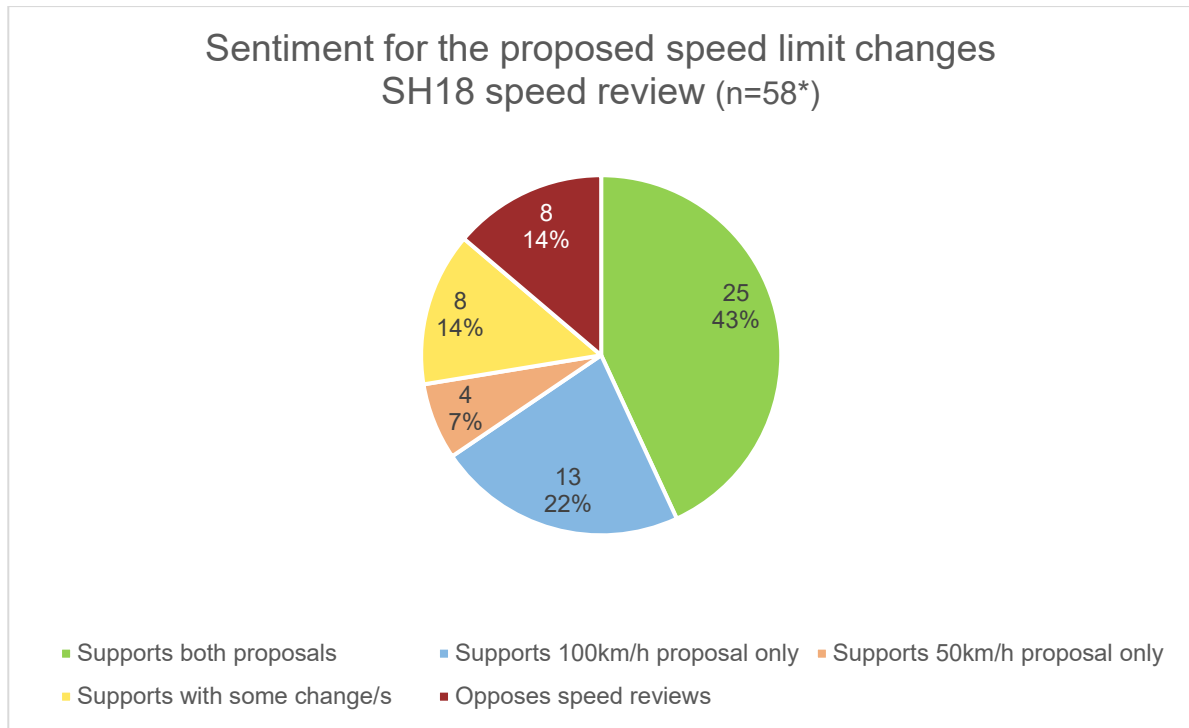
We consider all factors raised during formal consultation when making our decision on new permanent speed limits.

4. Summary and response to submissions

Across the four-week consultation period a total of 75 complete submissions were received, all via our online survey. Mana Whenua are generally supportive of safer speeds on this corridor.

We acknowledge the time and effort that went into these submissions and thank every person and organisation who contributed to the speed review process.

Sentiment for the proposed speed limits



* Note: In all we received 75 submissions. However nearly a quarter of all respondents provided no written feedback but did express interest in future communication about this project and the consultation's outcome (23%, 17 people).

From the remaining 58 people gave written feedback we could deduce there is strong support for the proposed speed reviews, either fully or in part (86%, 50 people).

Of these:

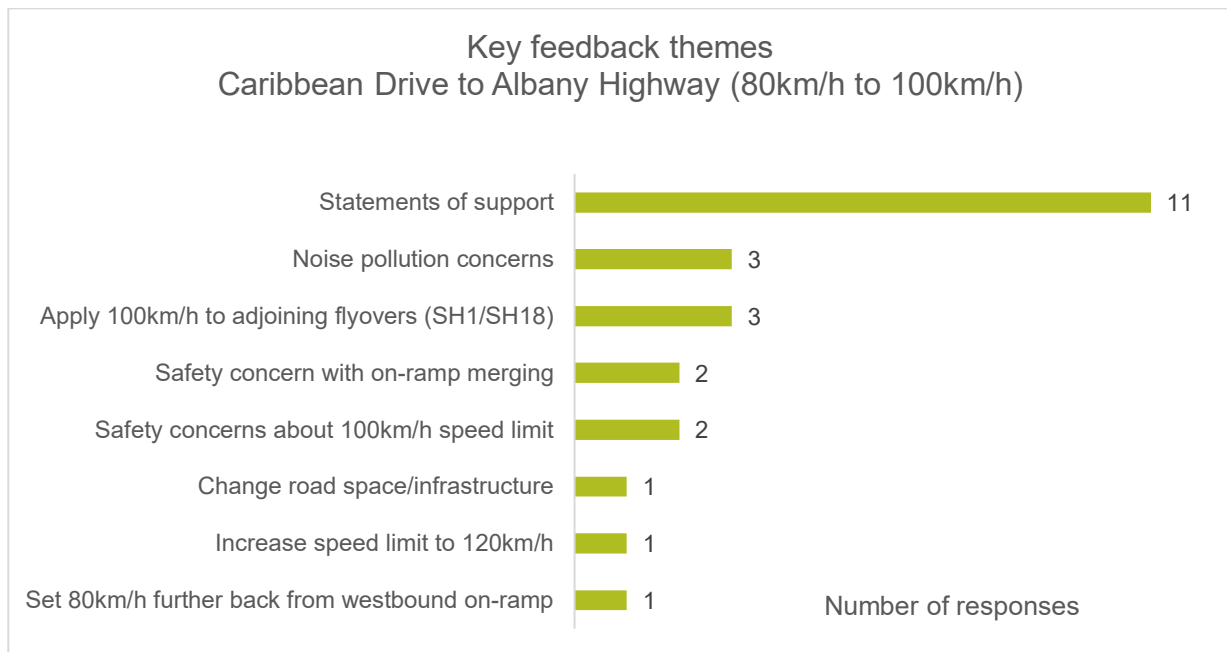
- 43% said they support both proposed speed reviews or speed reviews in general (25 people).
"The proposed changes make sense. Fully support this!"
- 22% expressed support for the proposed speed limit increase from 80km/h to 100km/h for the Caribbean Drive to Albany Highway section (13 people).
"I support this change - the road is excellent, free-flowing and capable of being driven at 100km/h."
- 7% support the proposed speed limit reduction from 80km/h to 50km/h for the Constellation Drive off-ramp to Caribbean Drive section (4 people)

“...this should absolutely be done...the intersection is dangerous already with this high of a speed limit and people rushing to catch lights.”

- 14% support either proposal but with suggested changes such as a compromise on the speed limits proposed or where they should apply, or a change to the road space design (8 people).

“Westbound Albany Highway off-ramp...utilise all the available space here, start the off-ramp earlier and keep it left so traffic slowing for the off-ramp doesn't impede through traffic.”

Key feedback themes



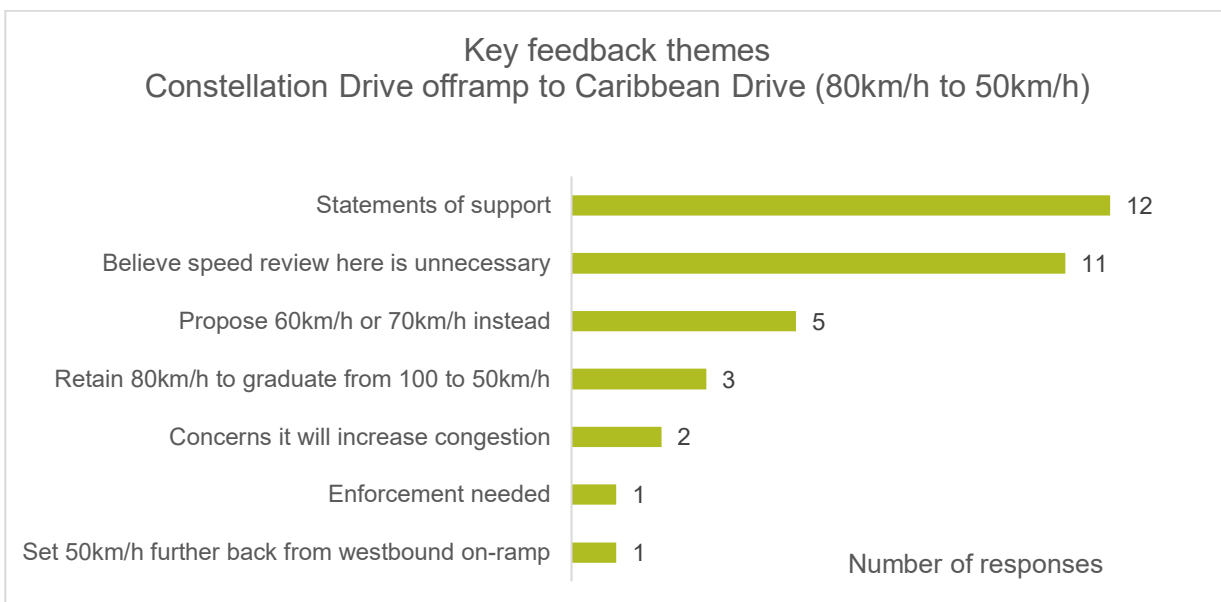
Most people gave feedback in support of – or to complement the implementation of – the proposed speed limit increase to 100km/h.

Some wanted the changes to go further by:

- Applying the 100km/h speed limit to the adjoining flyovers/underpasses between SH18 and SH1
- Setting an 80km/h speed limit ~100m back from the westbound on-ramp to transition vehicle speeds and/or safe merging leading up to the on-ramp
- Using more available road space at the westbound Albany Highway off-ramp to start the off-ramp earlier and keep exiting vehicles to the left, so through traffic on Caribbean Drive is not impeded
- Considering an increase to 120km/h.

Some expressed some concerns about the proposal for a variety of reasons including:

- Increased likelihood of noise and/or air pollution from speeding vehicles
- May endanger queuing traffic in this area or people moving to/from nearby sports fields; may also encourage traffic to speed downhill from Paul Matthews Drive to make this connection
- May compromise the safety of cyclists and pedestrians passing through or crossing in this area.



In contrast, there was slightly more opposition to this proposal than the first. People were unsure about the necessity and appropriateness of lowering the speed limit in this section from 80km/h to 50km/h for a variety of reasons, including:

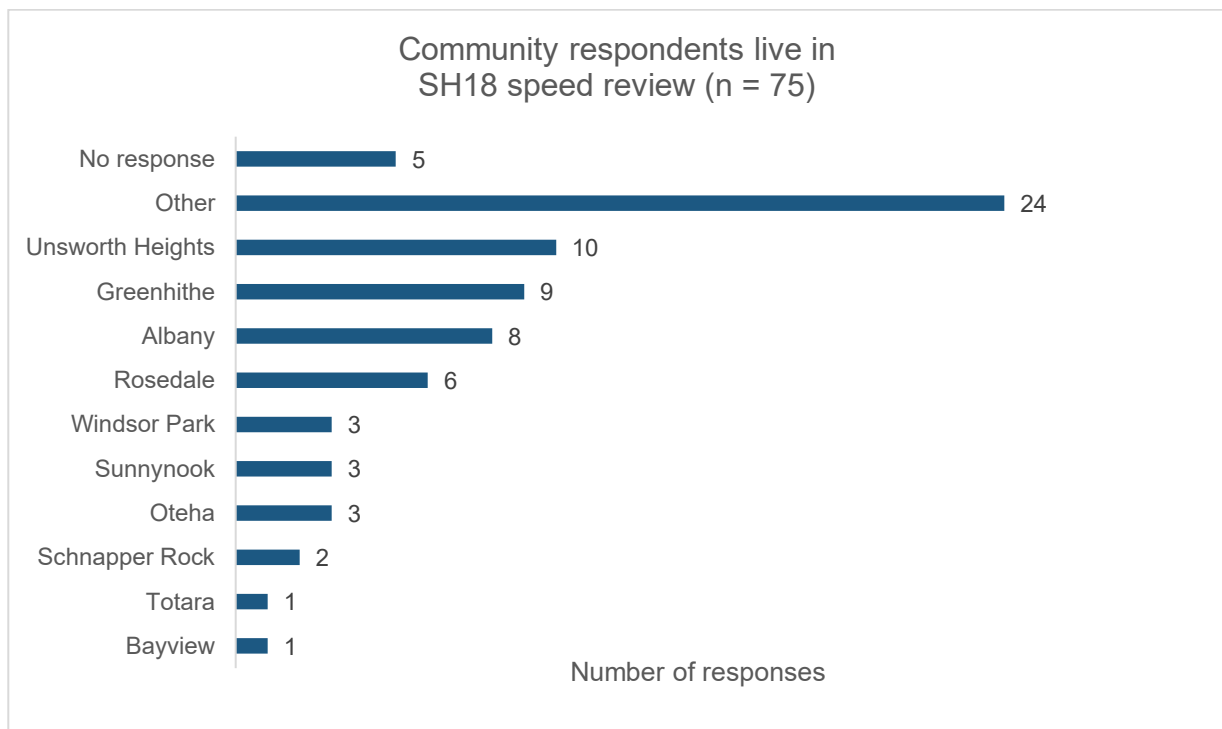
- A belief that this section should remain at 80km/h as it is non-urban, does not accommodate cyclists or pedestrians (has separated facilities for their safety), and is part of the motorway
- Perception that 50km/h is too slow for this environment and may inadvertently cause more accidents or congestion; propose considering 60km/h or 70km/h to keep traffic flowing
- Consider retaining the existing 80km/h speed limit.

Even so, most gave feedback in support of – or to complement the implementation of – the proposed speed limit decrease to 50km/h.

Some suggested that the changes to go further by:

- Instating the 50km/h speed limit earlier for safety i.e. _100m back from the westbound on-ramp
- Enforcing the lower speed limit to make it more effective.

About our respondents



Overall, most people appear to be travelling along these sections of SH18 from North Shore or north Auckland communities. The remainder are travelling primarily from the northwestern suburbs near the westernmost part of SH18.

A large proportion of respondents (33%, 24 people) came from communities outside those listed in our consultation survey to choose from. The table below shows all the other communities where they live.

This demonstrates a significant interest in the safety and/or efficiency of these areas for those travelling along these sections as part of their daily commute. Most are travelling from western suburbs via SH18 or from north Auckland (and beyond) via SH1.

Other communities	Number of people
Hobsonville	4
Torbay	4
Mairangi Bay	2
Auckland City	1
Dairy Flat	1
Fairview Heights	1

Other communities	Number of people
Gulf Harbour	1
Hatfields Beach	1
Henderson	1
Hillcrest	1
Swanson	1
Waiake	1

All submission comments

1. To support the changes in this area, Waka Kotahi proposed to increase the speed limit on this less than 400m section from 80km/h to 100km/h.
Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?
None - it makes perfect sense to me as people see 100 as the de facto limit now
I travel this route in both directions every day and I agree with the proposal that the speed limit be increased to 100km/h.
I agree with increasing the speed limit along SH18 to 100 km/h and believe that this change is long overdue.
I do not think so. I agree with the changes.
I support your proposal.
I support this recommendation
No. Do it.
Westbound Albany Highway off-ramp. Please utilise all the available space here and make the off ramp start earlier and keep it left so traffic slowing for the off ramp doesn't impede through traffic. As it currently stands the exit for this off ramp is far too late and causes congestion and increases the chance of an accident due to different speeds of those exiting and those travelling west. There is ample space here so I'm unsure why this was never done in first place? This will be even more important when speed is finally increased to 100 km/h west bound which is overdue also.
Agree with the above proposals.
No this is a very good decision to enhance traffic flow.
No
Think you are on right track has you say it is more motorway and speed should be adjusted accordingly
No. Suggested changes are good. Flyover from Sh18 EB to SH1 NB should also be 100km/h. Underpass from SH1 SB to SH18 WB should be 100km/h - this is no different to the SH20 SB to SH1 SB link. Consistency in speed instead of going from a 100km/h environment to 80km/h and back to 100km/h.
Makes sense with the changes now part of the motorway network, this can be a frustratingly slow stretch as people are still driving to roadworks risk level speeds.
Higher speeds means higher petrol consumption worse accident injuries. Why on earth are you thinking of increasing speed limits?
Good idea, the faster the better.
I fully support this decision.
Raise both limits to 100km/h
What you are proposing is correct.
No I feel like this proposal is very good.
Good plan to move to 100kph
No issue with the increase. It makes perfect sense. Please get on with it.
No. Support the proposal.
Yes, the link between SH1 and 18 should be 100 as well (both ways)

<p>The faster vehicles go the more noise they make, especially heavier vehicles using it as a Harbour Bridge alternative. Having lived in Unsworth Heights for much of the construction time and daily working in the area since, I know the already-entitled boyracer hooners and other vehicles fitted with after-market exhausts has been exhausting on us local residents and giving them license to go faster would exacerbate their problem. This is especially true for people higher up in the neighborhood, since the houses directly next door benefit from some (too short) noise barriers, but none of the rest of the neighborhood does.</p> <p>Enforcing the existing speed limit - especially in relation to east-bound traffic that comes tearing down the hill approaching the exit for Paul Matthews/Caribbean Drive access thereby endangering queues of morning & weekend traffic for the sports fields, is the proper, safe idea, not increasing it.</p>
<p>slower speeds can cause frustration</p>
<p>No</p>
<p>NO</p>
<p>The new section of SH18 has been finished and was designed for 100kmph speed limit so many motorists are ignoring the 80kmph temporary signs.</p>
<p>Agree with your proposal.</p>
<p>I join SH18 on the westbound on ramp every day, the issue I see consistently is people try to merge onto SH18 at about 60kph, this is partially because just before the merge there are 2 lanes merging to 1 on the on ramp forcing drivers to slow down, the other reason is people just don't know how to merge onto motorways by speeding up to the traffic flow speed. Increasing the westbound speed limit to 100kph is likely to cause traffic already on the motorway to have to slow down quickly. I see no reason the east bound speed limit could be increased though.</p>
<p>Please keep it at 80km/h to ensure safety as traffic merges from on-ramps in both directions</p>
<p>This proposed changes make sense.</p>
<p>No. Instead, I wish to celebrate that NZTA is willing to raise speed limits! This is a good move.</p>
<p>consistency at the higher limit is great.</p>
<p>The other factor that should be considered is the increase in traffic/road noise to nearby residents. An increase in speed results in increased ambient noise. Currently there are no noise barriers for a large portion of this section of motorway. These should be installed to offset the increase in ambient noise (and should already be in place for the current upgrades). I have read the reports why they aren't currently, and the reasons suggest there will be 'shading' etc created by the barriers, which is in all honesty nonsense. The transparent barriers which are in place after the harbour bridge/west haven area could be implemented, or at least shorter barriers installed to provide some noise attenuation versus not having anything.</p>
<p>I support the proposed increase from 80 to 100km/h</p>
<p>Noise Levels are too high with current Speed limit. I oppose increasing the speed limit to 100km/h. also, currently the road/motor way is being used by boy racers at night time</p>
<p>Good change. Much traffic moves straight through from the motorway now.</p>
<p>Do it!</p>

<p>Firstly, I imagine the images included on this survey are indicative only, in which case this may be moot.</p> <p>I think it would be prudent to ensure that the proposed 50->100km/h transition on the westbound onramp be set back from the intersection by around 50 to 100 metres. This would help to ensure that drivers are not accelerating up to 100km/h while still in (or more likely approaching) the intersection. This would help with pedestrian safety, both by making sure driver traverse the intersection at a lower speed, and also so that drivers are less likely to be paying attention to accelerating, instead of focusing on the potential hazards in/around the intersection.</p> <p>I think setting the speed transition back is particularly important for this style of onramp as, typically, approaches to onramps through an intersection (esp. traffic lights) are perpendicular. Approach speeds towards typical onramps is necessarily lower as the driver needs to make a 90° turn first. Whereas at this onramp the approach is straight on (at least from the constellation direction), meaning the driver is not slowed first by turning.</p>
I totally support this change - the road is now excellent, free-flowing and capable of being driven at 100kmh.
Why has it taken you so long to even propose this change? it should have been 100kmph from the date it opened.
Maybe make it 120km/h
Make the SH18-SH1 link 100km/h aswell
100k/m so it is consistent with the rest of the motorway

<p>2. To support the changes in this area, Waka Kotahi proposed to reduce the speed limit on this less than 400m section from 80km/h to 50km/h.</p> <p>Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?</p>
No. makes sense
No, this should absolutely be done as the intersection is dangerous already with this high of a speed limit and people rushing to catch lights.
Don't know
No
This section has all the characteristics of urban streets and motorists are staying under 50kmph accordingly.
Agree with your proposal.
I support this upgrade of the speed limit.
This makes sense as the volume of traffic seldom allows a faster speed anyway.
Agreed, this section should be reduced to 50km/h as it's essentially arterial roading.
Fully support this!
Excellent proposal
Yes. There are no houses or businesses in this zone, meaning that there are no side entrances or exits, except controlled by traffic lights. The roads are dual carriageways and arterial roads. With all that in mind, a speed limit of 70 (or, at a pinch, 60 km/h) would be more appropriate. Constellation Drive is far more urbanised, with many side crossings, where 50 km/h can be justified. That is not the situation in this zone.

<p>Why??? the road design is capable of safely supporting/keeping the higher limit. We should focus on moving vehicles and not clogging the road. cars arrive and depart SH1/SH18 at 100km - there are no turn off/on points - controlled by lights at each end. I have travelled this area twice a day for 10yrs and seldom seen an accident - do crash stats suggest there is a problem - i doubt it!!! Please leave as 80km/h.</p>
<p>The other factor that should be considered is the increase in traffic/road noise to nearby residents. An increase in speed results in increased ambient noise. Currently there are no noise barriers for a large portion of this section of motorway. These should be installed to offset the increase in ambient noise (and should already be in place for the current upgrades). I have read the reports why they aren't currently, and the reasons suggest there will be 'shading' etc created by the barriers, which is in all honesty nonsense. The transparent barriers which are in place after the harbour bridge/west haven area could be implemented, or at least shorter barriers installed to provide some noise attenuation versus not having anything.</p>
<p>I do not support this proposed change - This stretch of roadway should remain at 80km/h to allow the gradual decrease in speed down to the 50km/h limit as opposed to a sudden from 100 to 50km/h</p>
<p>This could cause additional back up for cars trying to get off the motorway.</p>
<p>Speed limit should be 60-80 as non urban</p>
<p>Sensible change. Many people have no idea what lane they should be in. Perhaps 60 would be more appropriate, but we don't see many 60 limits.</p>
<p>Please leave it at 80! When traffic is flowing it doesn't matter and is safe and as soon as traffic gets bad it goes to a crawl anyway.</p>
<p>The 80km/h signs for this section (at least westbound) haven't been present/visible since at least 2020... so the proposed "change" to 50km/h is the norm for anyone who regularly drives through this area. I would propose that the 50->100km/h transition is set back from the intersection. Please refer to my answer to the previous question</p>
<p>I support this change ... it is a busy stretch of road, and I normally don't get a chance to go faster than 50kmh anyway!</p>
<p>This does not need to be reduced, there are no houses with driveways on to this piece of road and therefore this should remain at 80kmph.</p>
<p>Don't change it</p>
<p>Keep it 80km/h</p>
<p>Will create backlog onto SH18</p>
<p>Okay</p>

5. Decision

The feedback received has been taken into consideration alongside the technical analysis of the changes to the road network undertaken on the corridor as part of the NCI project. The written submissions did not identify any issues that NZTA had not already considered in their analysis. The outcome of the speed review was in line with the proposed speed limit changes, and the permanent speed limits outlined below are in effect from 26 March 2024.

Location	Current speed limit	New speed limit
SH18 (eastbound) – between Albany Highway and the SH18-SH1 link	80km/h	100km/h
SH18 (westbound) – between Caribbean Drive and Albany Highway	80km/h	100km/h

Location	Current speed limit	New speed limit
Upper Harbour Highway (both directions) – between Caribbean Drive and the SH1 northbound on & offramp	80km/h	50km/h

The Director of Land Transport has confirmed approval for the speed limits proposed in accordance with the Alternative Method process provided for under Clause 2.6 of the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2022.

The letter from the Director of Land Transport is available to view on our website [Director Approval – SH18 speed limit changes – 27 February 2024 \(nzta.govt.nz\)](#)