



SH1 Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway 110km/h speed limit review

Consultation summary report

June 2025

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Published June 2025

ISBN 978-1-991311-54-2

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KĀORE I KITEA NGĀ TĀURUNGA RIPANGA IHIRANGI.

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Executive summary

In September 2024 NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) consulted on a proposal to increase the speed limit from 100km/h to 110km/h on two sections of state highway in north Auckland:

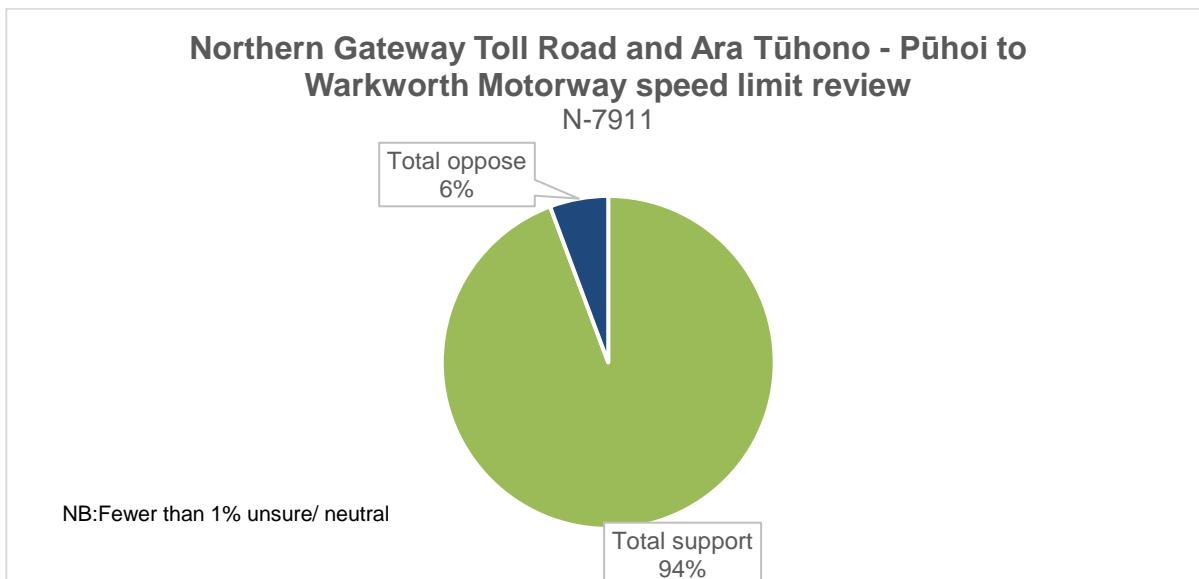
- Northern Gateway Toll Road
- Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorway.

These roads are part of Auckland's northern motorway, State Highway 1, between Orewa and Warkworth. Connecting at the Johnstones Hill Tunnels, they provide an important connection between Auckland and Northland.

We consulted on the proposed changes with partners, stakeholders and the community across Auckland and Northland from 03 September to 01 October 2024, in accordance with the Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2022.

We received 7,911 submissions during consultation, including 158 submissions from elected representatives and other organisations. Most people we heard from live in the upper North Island.

The overwhelming majority of submissions (94%) supported the proposed speed limit increase for both SH1 Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorway, with 91% strongly supporting. 6% of people we heard from did not support the proposed increase for both roads. Fewer than 1% of people we heard from were unsure or provided neutral feedback.



Base. All submissions (7911)

Most people had the same views or very similar feedback for speed reviews on both Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway.

A small numbers of submitters (106) shared comments specific to Johnstones Hill Tunnels, these are outlined further in this report.

Support for increased speed limit

The main reason for supporting the proposed speed limit increase was that the roads have been designed and constructed with safety features such as two lanes in each direction providing safe passing opportunities, physical median separation between opposing lanes, and a mostly straight, wide alignment.

The second most mentioned reason was the improvement in journey times and travel efficiencies that a higher speed limit would bring. Following this, people pointed to the other areas of New Zealand that have this speed already such as the Waikato Expressway.

Those not supporting the proposed speed limit increase cited safety concerns and feel that a minimal saving in journey times did not justify the proposed increase.

Two common concerns expressed by both people who support and do not support the proposal was that some drivers would travel faster than the 110 km/h speed limit (1%), as well perceptions of existing poor driving behaviour potentially being exacerbated by the proposed speed limit increase (1%). Many of these people believed there should be more enforcement to support higher speed limit, increased signage and encouragement to 'keep left unless passing', as well as increased driver education and training.

Variable speed limits were recommended by a small number of submitters (1%), including to reflect weather conditions.

NZTA will be working with NZ Police to ensure a continued effective approach for speed enforcement should the new speed limit be approved and implemented.

Outcome of speed review

We have considered all feedback alongside the technical assessments for both Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth, and have approval to increase the speed limit to 110km/h.

Thank you to everyone who provided us feedback.

Context/background

Changing speed limits is a legal process that involves a number of steps. NZTA as a road controlling authority, is responsible for managing speed limits on New Zealand's state highways (the Director of Land Transport is responsible for certifying speed limits).

The legal process includes a formal consultation step where we present our proposed speed limit changes on sections of state highways and invite feedback on those proposed changes. .

The proposal to increase the speed limit on the SH1 Northern Gateway Toll Road from 100km/h to 110km/h was consulted on under the Setting of Speed Limits 2022 Rule, and we ensured that it aligned with the new 2024 Setting of Speed Limits Rule which came into force on 30th October 2024, just after the consultation period closed.

We reviewed the speed limit on two sections of the SH1 northern motorway between Orewa and Warkworth:

- the **Northern Gateway Toll Road** - from north of the toll gantry to the southern entrance/exit of Johnstones Hill Tunnels, and
- **Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorway** - from the northern entrance/exit of Johnstones Hill Tunnels to the northern end of the motorway (by the Pukerito roundabout).

Connecting at the Johnstones Hill Tunnels, they provide an important connection between Auckland and Northland. They are designed and constructed with safety features that significantly reduce the chance of death or serious injury in a crash – for example, two lanes in each direction, physical separation between opposing lanes to prevent head-on crashes and a mostly straight, wide alignment.

While the SH1 Johnstones Hill Tunnels are also built to high safety standards, the enclosed environment within a tunnel creates a different safety risk to that of the surrounding motorway. The speed limit on SH1 through the Johnstones Hill Tunnels is 80km/h and at this stage we have no plans to review and change that speed limit.

The section of motorway south of the Northern Gateway Toll Road currently operates with a permanent speed limit of 100km/h through to the Auckland Harbour Bridge and we have no plans to review that speed limit.

These roads are part of Auckland's Northern Motorway (SH1) between Orewa and Warkworth. Connecting at the Johnstones Hill Tunnels, they provide an important connection between Auckland and Northland. Both these sections of SH1 are important roads, helping reduce congestion and improving travel time reliability for people and freight in the area. These motorways are designed and constructed to a high safety standard, with safety features that significantly reduce the chance of death or serious injury in a crash – such as, two lanes in each direction, physical separation between opposing lanes to prevent head-on crashes and a mostly straight, wide alignment. These high safety standards mean that the increased speed limit can be considered.

Consultation and engagement approach

Public consultation ran for 4 weeks from 3 September to 1 October.

The purpose of the consultation was to inform the community, partners, and stakeholders of the proposed speed limit increase on the Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth and to provide them with an opportunity to have their say, so that their views could be considered when making a decision on the proposed speed limit increase.

The specific consultation objectives were to:

- 1. Ensure people understood what was being proposed, had the opportunity to have their say and knew how their feedback would be used*
- 2. Encourage a healthy number of submissions to provide a range of views and valuable input into decision making*
- 3. Communicate the features of the new expressway that enable a 110km/h speed limit to be considered and to explain why some sections of regional highway were not included in the proposed speed limit increase.*

Engagement with partners and key stakeholders

Our formal consultation involved engaging with a range of partners and key stakeholders including:

- **Iwi partners**
- **Council partners** – Rodney Local Board, Hibiscus and Bays Local Board, Upper Harbour Local Board, Regional Transport Committee councillors, Mayor of Auckland, Auckland Transport, Northland Regional Council, Kaipara District Council, Whangārei District Council, Far North District Council, Albany Ward and Rodney Ward.
- **Emergency Service partners** – NZ Police, Fire and Emergency NZ, St John's
- **Transportation partners** – Ia Ara Aotearoa/Transporting NZ, NZ Heavy Haulage Association, NZ Trucking Association, National Road Carriers
- **Other stakeholders** – AA, Northland Transportation Alliance, advocacy/interest groups engaged during speed management projects in Northland and Auckland.

Public engagement

While both the Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorways are in the Auckland region, its position connecting the upper North Island with Northland means a large portion of those who use it are from outside the immediate region. For the formal consultation, along with advertising within North Auckland, we also advertised both further north (Northland) and south of the motorways.

Methods to inform the public about the consultation included:

- Brochures made available at local board offices, community centres and libraries in Upper Harbour, Hibiscus and Bays, Kaipatiki, Rodney, Takapuna, Ōrewa, Whangaparaoa, Albany, East Coast Bays, Stillwater, Dairy Flat, Warkworth, and Wellsford.
- Content sent to council partners for sharing through their channels.
- Digital advertising reaching across Auckland to Warkworth
- Project newsletters
- Social media posts on Facebook

Our social media activity was particularly effective in engaging the public. Over 600,000 viewed our three Facebook posts and over 8000 visited the consultation website. We therefore reached 1 in 4 people in Auckland and Northland via social media alone.

Consultation questions

Our consultation questions were framed with the opening statement:

When considering a speed change on our state highways, we take into account a range of factors before making a decision, including safety, efficiency, accessibility, noise and environmental factors, as well as the views of the community and stakeholders.

The questions were split by the two motorways; Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth to allow respondents to provide a separate view on each motorway.

The first question, with response options given as a Likert scale, was:

- *What do you think about the proposed 110km/h speed limit on the **Northern Gateway Toll Road**?*

The Likert scale response options were Strongly Oppose, Oppose, Neutral, Support, Strongly Support, Unsure.

The second, open-ended question was:

- *Why do you think that?*

The third question, with response options given as a Likert scale, was:

- *What do you think about the proposed 110km/h speed limit on the **Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth**?*

The Likert scale response options were Strongly Oppose, Oppose, Neutral, Support, Strongly Support, Unsure.

The fourth, open-ended question was the same as the second:

- *Why do you think that?*

Consultation overview

State Highway 1 Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway speed limit review consultation



7911 total submissions



7753 individuals



158 businesses or organisations



27% Northland

73% Auckland

<1% Other



91% strongly support

2% slightly support

1% unsure or neutral

5% strongly oppose

1% slightly oppose

Themes for those in support

Road is designed/built to a high safety standard

Improved travel times and reduce congestion

Consistent with other motorways such as Waikato Expressway and internationally

People already travel this speed

Themes for those opposed

Reduces safety and causes more accidents

Won't improve travel times significantly

People will drive faster than 100km/h

100km/h is fast enough

Sounds like

"Not necessary. Speed kills. Plan your trip you won't get there faster."

"New highway is safe and smooth with each way separated by more than a white line. Similar to waikato expressway. 100 is too slow."

"The road may be safe for the speed suggested, but the standard of Kiwi driving is woefully poor and most drivers are simply incapable of driving safely at almost any speed, let alone a higher limit than currently in place."

"It's one of the nation's safest highways. Traveling on existing 110 km/h motorways is a pleasure compared to 80 km/h motorways in the inner parts of the Auckland network, even in light traffic. Based on personal experience on both, drivers tend to concentrate and focus more on the 110 km/h sections, use lanes more appropriately and adhere to proper 2 second plus following distances."

Shared minority concern that Johnstons Hill tunnel should be included in the speed limit increase



What we heard

Over the four-week consultation period we received 7911 submissions. Most submissions (7902) were made via the consultation webpage, with the remainder via email or hardcopy submission form.

Almost all (98%) submitters were individuals, and the remainder were representatives, submitting on behalf of organisations or groups.

Submissions were received primarily from the Auckland (73%) and Northland (27%) regions, with fewer than 1% from outside the region including:

- Waikato
- Warkworth
- Wellington
- Hamilton
- Tauranga
- Christchurch
- Manawatū
- Bay of Plenty
- Hawkes Bay

Submitters were asked what their main interest was in using the SH1 Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway; with visiting family and friends, recreation, working in the area and living along or near the area being the top four reasons given.

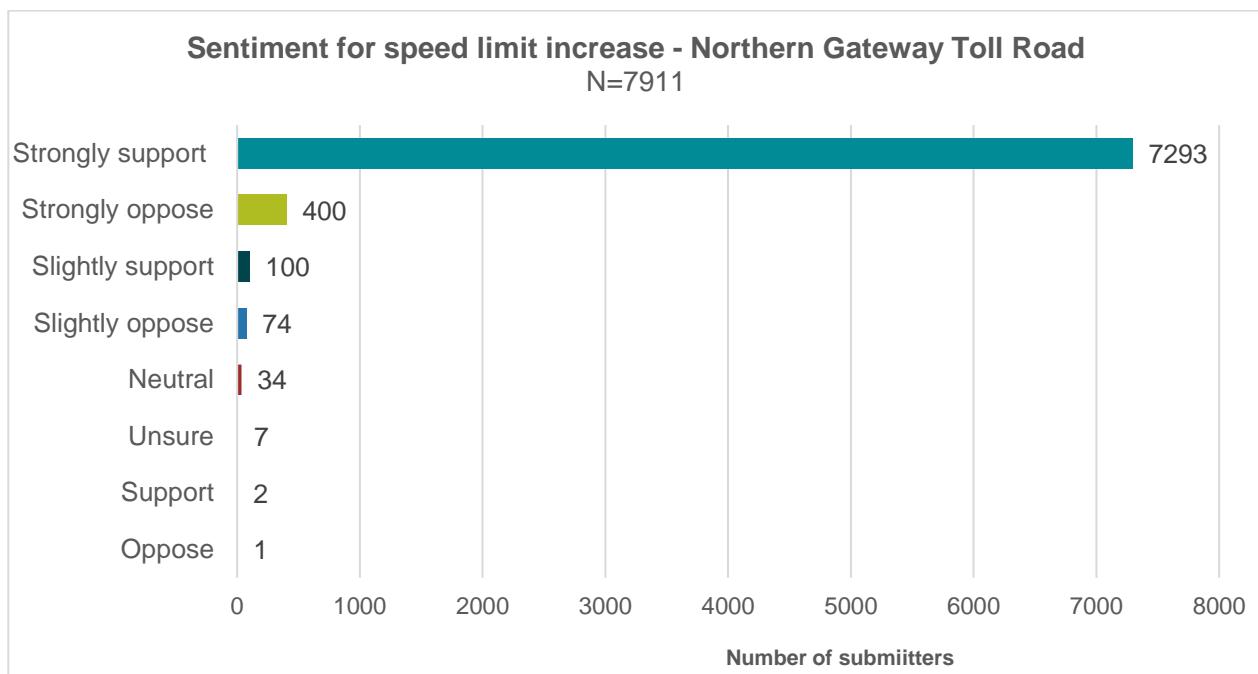
Overall level of support

There was strong overall support for the proposed speed limit increase on both roads, with 91% of submissions *strongly* in support.

93% support the increase on Northern Gateway Toll Road overall, and 94% support the increase on Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway overall.

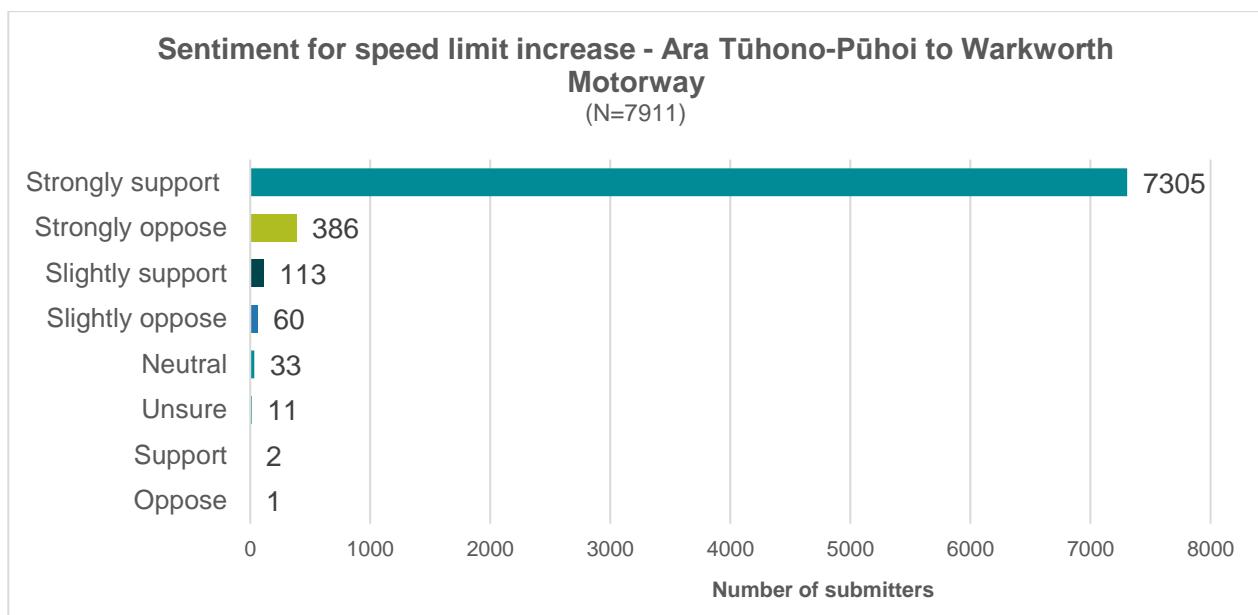
6% of submissions for both roads opposed the increase, most of which were strongly in opposition.

Overall level of support – Northern Gateway Toll Road



Base. 7911 (all submissions)

Overall level of support - Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway



Base. 7911 (all submissions)

Summary of feedback from Treaty partners

No submissions were received from the iwi partners that we engaged.

Summary of feedback from other partners and stakeholders

Detailed submissions were received from the following 8 organisations/groups:

| Organisation | Summary of their feedback | Our response |
|--|---|--|
| National Road Carriers Association Support the increase for both roads | Highlighted that the proposed increase aligns with Waikato Expressway. Indicated the quality of the road allows for an increase in the speed limit. | Noted with thanks. |
| Fire and Emergency NZ Support the increase for both roads | Compared quality of the road to the Waikato Expressway, noting no unruly driving seen and therefore no increased risk of accidents during their observations including drivers travelling in excess of 110 already. Highlighted that heavy vehicles and cars towing must abide by previous speed limits. | We will continue to have speed enforcement interventions for people who travel over the designated speed limit. NZTA will be working with NZ Police on speed enforcement for this section of highway. Police will apply the same enforcement considerations to 110 km/h roads as any other part of the road network. This includes deploying to locations where the road safety risk is greatest. As correctly highlighted, the current 90km/h speed limit for heavy vehicles and towing vehicles will still apply on 110km/h roads. The 90km/h speed limit for heavy vehicles is set under the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 and was deemed the appropriate speed limit for heavy vehicles when considering both safety and efficiency. Other road users should be able to pass slower-moving vehicles safely and easily. |
| Rodney Local Board Support the increase for both roads | Rodney Local Board in support of the speed increase. The Rodney Local Board put the support of the speed increase to a vote noting both roads were built to high safety standards - support carried (5 votes to 4) | Noted with thanks. |
| Northland Regional Council - Transport Committee | Recognises the importance of this critical infrastructure, supporting the economic and social connectivity between | As with any changes made on our state highways, we continue to monitor the impact and may |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Support the increase for both roads</p> | <p>Auckland and Northland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speed limit increase is strongly supported reflecting the high safety standards these roads adhere to, including features such as physical separation of lanes and safe passing opportunities. • The change is expected to enhance the efficiency of transport and reduce travel times, contributing positively to the region's development and the wellbeing of communities. • The increase is expected to deliver significant benefits without compromising the safety <p>The submission noted that ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the road safety performance should be maintained. They urged adoption of the proposed speed limit review, with a commitment to review its impact periodically to ensure the anticipated benefits are realised and sustained.</p> | <p>decide to make further required changes if necessary.</p> |
| <p>Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand</p> <p>Support the increase for both roads</p> | <p>Believe that high speeds are appropriate on suitably constructed infrastructure such as this road.</p> <p>Highlighted that enabling cars to pass trucks more quickly is safer.</p> <p>As people are likely to naturally travel at that speed (110) on this type of road</p> <p>Noted that while the indicative travel time saving is approximately 1.5mins, given the high volume of users, the time savings accumulated will contribute positively to the government goal of improved productivity.</p> <p>Highlighted that this road should be raised to 110km/h to be consistent with other expressways in the country.</p> | <p>Noted with thanks.</p> |
| <p>NZ Police</p> <p>Support the increase for both roads</p> | <p>Highlighted the "significant engineering" that went into the construction with high quality safety infrastructure and quality road design, in line with international evidence.</p> <p>Noted the lack of fatal or serious injury crashes on both roads to date</p> | <p>NZTA are working to support an overall safe system approach which includes safer vehicles, safer drivers and safer roads, to ensure everyone can get where they need to go safely and efficiently.</p> |

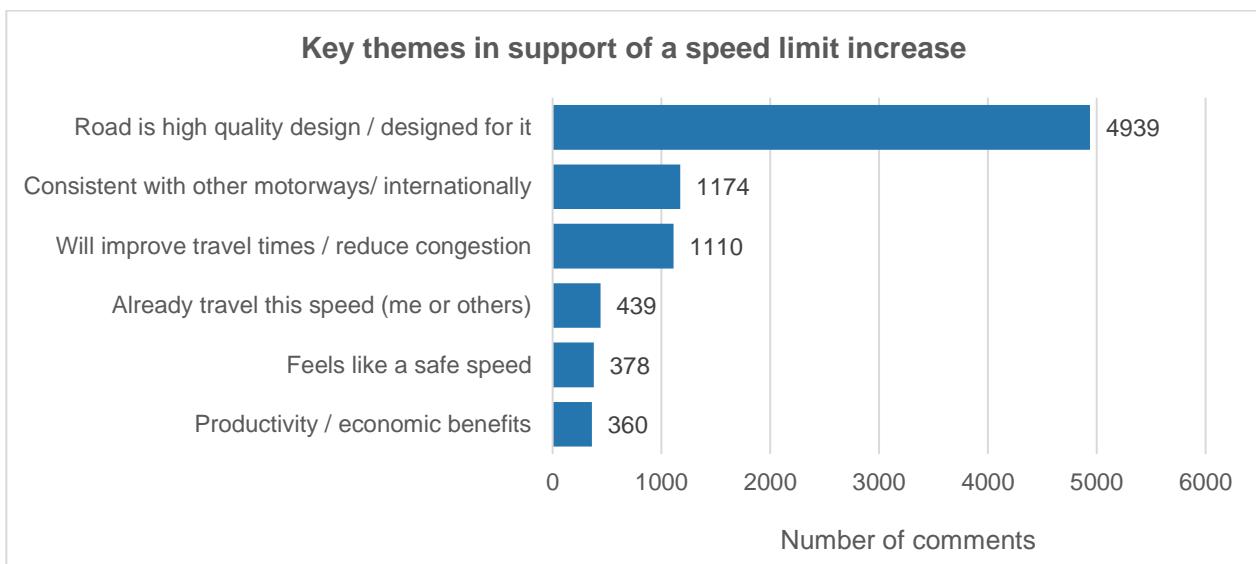
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| | <p>Highlighted that one of NZ Police's goals is Safe Roads – preventing death and injury with its partners. The proposed speed limit increase is in line with safe system principles and the need for our transport system to be forgiving in the event that a mistake is made, and a crash should occur.</p> | |
| <p>Hibiscus and Bays Local Board</p> <p>Oppose the increase for both roads</p> | <p>Noted it was challenging to provide feedback without full detail included around potential impacts e.g. analysis relating to the statistical likelihood of death or serious injuries not provided</p> <p>Mentioned that the key benefit is a faster journey, however time saved from Ōrewa to Warkworth would minimal.</p> <p>Observe that with no planned changes to increase speed limit for heavies, there is a lack of evidence of the suggested productivity gains.</p> <p>Noted that both sections built to high safety standards, with a strong safety record of no deaths to date.</p> | <p>We have noted the challenges to providing feedback.</p> <p>While the reduction in single journey times is relatively small, for some road users particularly more frequent users, the impact of the reduced journey times is seen as more significant, especially when viewed cumulatively.</p> <p>It's correct that the current 90km/h speed limit for heavy vehicles and towing vehicles will still apply on roads with a 110km/h speed limit, which means journey times for vehicles carrying freight will remain unchanged. However, the 90km/h speed limit for heavy vehicles is set under the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 and was deemed the appropriate speed limit for heavy vehicles when considering both safety and efficiency. Some heavy vehicles can weigh up to 60 tonne and take a lot longer to slow down and stop.</p> <p>The motorways proposed to change to 110km/h have at least two lanes in each direction, so other road users should be able to safely and easily pass slower-moving vehicles.</p> |
| <p>NZ Automobile Association Inc</p> <p>Strongly Oppose for Northern Gateway Toll Road</p> <p>Strongly Support for Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway</p> | <p>Northern Gateway Toll Road</p> <p>Highlighted that Heavy vehicles will still be restricted to 90 km/h so there would be no productivity gain for freight movement.</p> <p>Highlighted the potentially negligible time saving, with the acceleration and deceleration requirements around the tunnels a potential safety risk.</p> | <p>The current 90km/h speed limit for heavy vehicles and towing vehicles will still apply on roads with a 110km/h speed limit, which means journey times for vehicles carrying freight will remain unchanged. The 90km/h speed limit for heavy vehicles is set under the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 and was deemed the appropriate speed limit for heavy vehicles when considering both safety and efficiency.</p> |

| | | |
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| | <p>Queried what level of speeding offences have been recorded and what data might be available on speed through the tunnels. Speeding offences would be expected to increase with a higher approach speed.</p> <p>Indicated that frequent speed limit changes are confusing and undesirable. Consistencies with speed limits changes are preferred.</p> <p>Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth Motorway</p> <p>Mentioned the road has been designed for a speed limit of 110 km/h, with drivers travelling this speed naturally.</p> <p>Highlighted that heavy vehicles will still be restricted to 90 km/h so there would be limited productivity gain for freight movement.</p> <p>Indicated support with considerations around increased enforcement, additional speed limit signage, and ensuring enough notification to support safe deceleration.</p> | <p>efficiency. Some heavy vehicles can weigh up to 60 tonne and take a lot longer to slow down and stop.</p> <p>The roads proposed to change to 110km/h have at least two lanes in each direction, so other road users should be able to safely and easily pass slower-moving vehicles.</p> <p>With regards to acceleration and deceleration, we're currently reviewing and will update the road signage associated with the speed change to ensure clear messaging.</p> <p>This includes repeater signs on the motorway within the proposed 110 km/h section as well as advanced warning signage prior to the speed threshold change at both ends.</p> <p>Should the proposed speed limit increase proceed, then communication activity will be developed and run ahead of its implementation. This will include information regarding driving safely on the motorway.</p> <p>Speeding offence data is not information held by NZTA. This is held by NZ Police, and we suggest AA request directly.</p> <p>Police will apply the same enforcement considerations to 110 km/h roads as any other part of the road network. This includes deploying to locations where the road safety risk is greatest.</p> <p>Officers will continue to use discretion in applying enforcement interventions according to the circumstances, with a focus on ensuring people drive in a safe manner and at a safe speed.</p> |
|--|--|---|

Main themes of feedback

Support for 110km/h speed limit

Submitters who supported the proposed speed limit increase, often indicated more than one reason for their support. Below are the key themes to their feedback:



Base. Total submissions supporting the proposed speed limit increase.

Nearly two thirds (62%) of people supporting the proposed speed limit increase referred to the road as designed and constructed to a high safety standard.

Examples of what we heard:

- “The road is very well engineered and has safety features that make it nearly impossible to have a head on crash.”
- “New highway is safe and smooth with each way separated by more than a white line. Similar to waikato expressway. 100 is too slow.”
- “It's one of the nation's safest highways. Traveling on existing 110 km/h motorways is a pleasure compared to 80 km/h motorways in the inner parts of the Auckland network, even in light traffic. Based on personal experience on both, drivers tend to concentrate and focus more on the 110 km/h sections, use lanes more appropriately and adhere to proper 2 second plus following distances.”
- “In general I don't support the raising of speed limits (especially the proposed change back to 100 from the reductions to 80), but I believe this stretch of road can accommodate this speed.”

Other support themes included:

- 100km/h is too slow/ difficult to maintain
- Cars are safer / better
- General positive comment (e.g. “About time”)

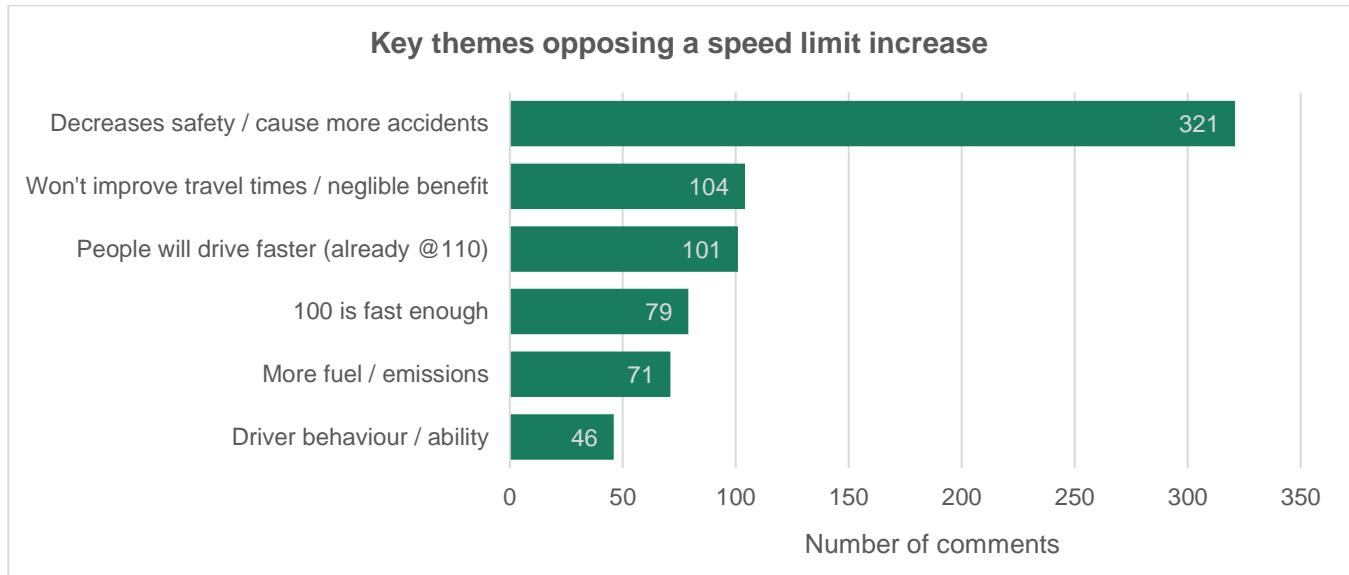
Submitters who supported also shared suggestions, with the main suggestion encouraging extending the speed increase over 110km/h (454 comments)

| Feedback theme | Our response |
|--|---|
| Road is high quality design / designed for 110 speed limit | <p>NZTA are working to support an overall safe system approach which includes safer vehicles, safer drivers and safer roads, to ensure everyone can get where they need to go safely and efficiently.</p> <p>As part of our process to determine the appropriate speed limit for a road, we consider the design of the road and its surrounding environment, how people are using the road, and collective safety risk.</p> <p>The Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono Pūhoi to Warkworth were both designed and constructed with safety features like two lanes in each direction, providing safe passing opportunities, physical separation between opposing lanes to prevent head-on crashes, and a mostly straight, wide alignment.</p> |
| Will improve travel times / reduce congestion | <p>The speed limit increase aligns with the Government's commitment to getting people where they need to go, safely and efficiently.</p> <p>The impact on single journey times will be relatively small, with no impact on those heavy and towing vehicles, for whom the current 90 km/h speed limit will remain unchanged.</p> <p>However, for some road users, particularly more frequent users, the impact of the reduced journey times may be greater, particularly when viewed cumulatively.</p> |
| Consistent with other motorways/ internationally | <p>Our approach to setting speed limits is governed by the current Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits. This takes into consideration factors such as road classification, traffic volumes, road geometry and safety assessments.</p> <p>While NZTA continues to keep across speed management practices in other countries, our approach is not developed in response to speed limits in operation overseas. Different countries operate in different environments where factors such as road construction may vary.</p> |
| Already travel this speed (me or others) | <p>Speed enforcement interventions will continue for people who travel over the designated speed limit.</p> <p>Police will apply the same enforcement considerations to 110 km/h roads as any other part of the road network. This includes deploying to locations where the road safety risk is greatest.</p> <p>Officers will continue to use discretion in applying enforcement interventions according to the</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>circumstances, with a focus on ensuring people drive in a safe manner and at a safe speed.</p> <p>Drivers should continue to drive to the conditions, free from impairment and distraction, and make sure everyone in the vehicle is properly restrained. By doing this, you will dramatically reduce the chances of causing harm to yourself and others on the road.</p> |
| <p>Productivity / economic benefits</p> | <p>The speed limit increase aligns with the Government's commitment to getting people where they need to go, safely and efficiently. This also increases productivity on our network and in turn delivering wider economic benefits.</p> <p>The impact on single journey times will be relatively small, with no impact on those heavy and towing vehicles, for whom the current 90 km/h speed limit will remain unchanged.</p> <p>However, for some road users, particularly more frequent users, the impact of the reduced journey times may be greater, particularly when viewed cumulatively.</p> |
| <p>Suggest higher than 110km/h speed limit</p> | <p>This speed review was completed under the Setting of Speed Limits Rule (2022), which included no provision for a speed limit of 120km/h or higher. Consultation on a draft of the new Setting of Speed Limits Rule (2024) requested feedback on the possibility of 120 km/h on roads. NZTA is assessing what features a road would need to safely set a 120km/h speed limit but until then, there are no plans to increase the speed limit higher than 110km/h for this motorway.</p> |

Feedback themes from the submissions opposing the proposed 110km/h speed limit increase

Submitters who oppose the proposed speed limit increase (6%), often indicated more than one reason for their opposition. Below are the key themes in the feedback:



Base. Total submissions opposing the proposed speed limit increase.

Examples of what we heard:

- “Not necessary. Speed kills. Plan your trip you won’t get there faster.”
- “Too large a speed differential between the tunnels and the rest leading to unsafe situations. Only very limited time gain against significant environmental and safety impacts.”
- “The road may be safe for the speed suggested, but the standard of Kiwi driving is woefully poor and most drivers are simply incapable of driving safely at almost any speed, let alone a higher limit than currently in place.”
- “If 110km/h is implemented, drivers will do 120.”

| Feedback theme | Our response |
|---|--|
| <p>Speed increase will decrease safety / cause more/worse accidents</p> <p>100km/h is fast enough for this road / standard of driving needs to improve before raising</p> | <p>A 110 km/h speed limit is safe and appropriate on sections of state highway that are designed to a high standard with adequate safety features. This includes a straight or slightly curved road design for visibility, at least two lanes in each direction for safe passing opportunities, physical separation between opposing lanes to prevent head-on crash risk, and no driveways or intersections along the road. The road should also carry less than 25,000 vehicles per day on average in each direction.</p> <p>An example of this is the Waikato Expressway, which has safely operated at a speed limit of 110km/h since 2022.</p> <p>The Northern Gateway Toll Road and Ara Tūhono - Pūhoi to Warkworth meet the safety requirements to operate at a speed limit of 110km/h as they are median separated roads. Additional safety improvements are being considered over the next 12 to 18 months.</p> |
| <p>Won't improve travel times / negligible benefit</p> | <p>While the reduction in journey times may be viewed by some as small, for other road users the reductions are seen as more significant, particularly for frequent users who may consider the cumulative impact of the reduced journey times.</p> |
| <p>People are already travelling at 110km/h now, an increase will encourage people to travel even faster exceed 110km/h</p> | <p>Speed enforcement interventions will continue for people who travel over the designated speed limit.</p> <p>Police will apply the same enforcement considerations to 110 km/h roads as any other part of the road network. This includes deploying to locations where the road safety risk is greatest.</p> <p>Officers will continue to use discretion in applying enforcement interventions according to the circumstances, with a focus on ensuring people drive in a safe manner and at a safe speed.</p> <p>Drivers should continue to drive to the conditions, free from impairment and distraction, and make sure everyone in the vehicle is properly restrained.</p> |
| <p>Speed increase will increase fuel consumption and emissions</p> | <p>Calculating vehicle emissions is complicated as there are multiple factors that need to be considered, in addition to speed.</p> <p>There are over 4 million vehicles on Aotearoa roads, with over half of these classified as light passenger vehicles. Fuel consumption for light passenger vehicles will vary depending on the speed travelled as well as factors such as vehicle size, shape (related to air resistance), fuel type, age and how a person drives (e.g. sudden braking or accelerating).</p> |

| | |
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| | <p>During congested conditions fuel efficiency is typically reduced resulting in higher vehicle emissions.</p> <p>NZTA, use the Vehicles Emissions Prediction Model (VEPM) to estimate fleet average emissions from vehicles in the fleet, based on their average speed and typical road, traffic and operating conditions, such as weather.</p> <p>VEPM predicts that the lowest emissions for the light vehicle fleet occur at average speeds between 70-75km/h. Speeds outside of this range, both lower and higher, are estimated to create higher emissions on average but other factors must be taken into consideration when considering speed management such as people's safety, roading infrastructure, traffic volume and operating conditions.</p> |
| Increased signage and driver education is needed | <p>We're currently reviewing and will update the road signage associated with the speed change to ensure clear messaging.</p> <p>This includes repeater signs on the motorway within the proposed 110 km/h section as well as advanced warning signage prior to the speed threshold change at both ends. Additional speed limit signs will be installed beyond the thresholds to reinforce lower posted speed limits.</p> <p>As we implement the 110km/h speed limit, we will provide information and reminders about driving safely on the motorway.</p> |

1. Feedback common to both submissions supporting and opposing the proposed speed increase

A small proportion (3%) of comments received in the submissions were common to both those supporting or not supporting the speed limit increase proposal. The key themes were:

- Perception of other drivers having low skills (e.g. too slow, not keeping left) (107 comments)
- Concerns that people will drive faster, i.e. above 110 km/h (103 comments)
- Suggesting increased signage and driver education required (87 comments)
- Suggesting that weather/ condition related speed limits could be applied (20 comments)

| Feedback theme | Our response |
|-------------------------|---|
| Skills of other drivers | Driver behaviour remains a key focus. We will continue to undertake marketing and education initiatives to help build awareness of how to make good driving choices. Find more information on |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>driver education on our website: nzta.govt.nz/safety/building-your-driving-skills/</p> <p>NZTA also regularly publishes and promotes 'keep left unless passing" messaging via posts on our social media channels including Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and TikTok. Between 1 May 2023 and 12 May 2025 this messaging reached people over 9.4 million times.</p> <p>These posts encourage people to keep left by talking about how this makes travel safer and more efficient for everyone. These posts also emphasise the requirement for people travelling slowly to pull over on single lane roads to let other people pass.</p> <p>Communication activity will be developed and run ahead of the implementation of the new speed limit. This will include information regarding driving safely on the motorway.</p> |
| More enforcement needed | <p>Speed enforcement interventions will continue for people who travel over the designated speed limit. NZTA will be working with NZ Police on speed enforcement for this section of highway.</p> <p>Police will apply the same enforcement considerations to 110 km/h roads as any other part of the road network. This includes deploying to locations where the road safety risk is greatest. Officers will continue to use discretion in applying enforcement interventions according to the circumstances, with a focus on ensuring people drive in a safe manner and at a safe speed.</p> <p>Drivers should continue to drive to the conditions, free from impairment and distraction, and make sure everyone in the vehicle is properly restrained. By doing this, you will dramatically reduce the chances of causing harm to yourself and others on the road.</p> |
| Increased signage and driver education required | <p>We're currently reviewing and will update the road signage associated with the speed change to ensure clear messaging.</p> <p>This includes repeater signs on the motorway within the proposed 110 km/h section as well as advanced warning signage prior to the speed threshold change at both ends. Additional speed signs will be installed beyond the thresholds to reinforce lower posted speed limits.</p> <p>As we implement the 110km/h speed limit, we will provide information and reminders about driving safely on the motorway.</p> |
| Variable and weather-related speed limits could be applied | <p>The Ara Tūhono – Pūhoi to Warkworth motorway does have a variable speed limit (VSL) at the north end of the motorway. This variable speed limit is to allow smart management of traffic to the roundabout on the northbound side. We aren't considering</p> |

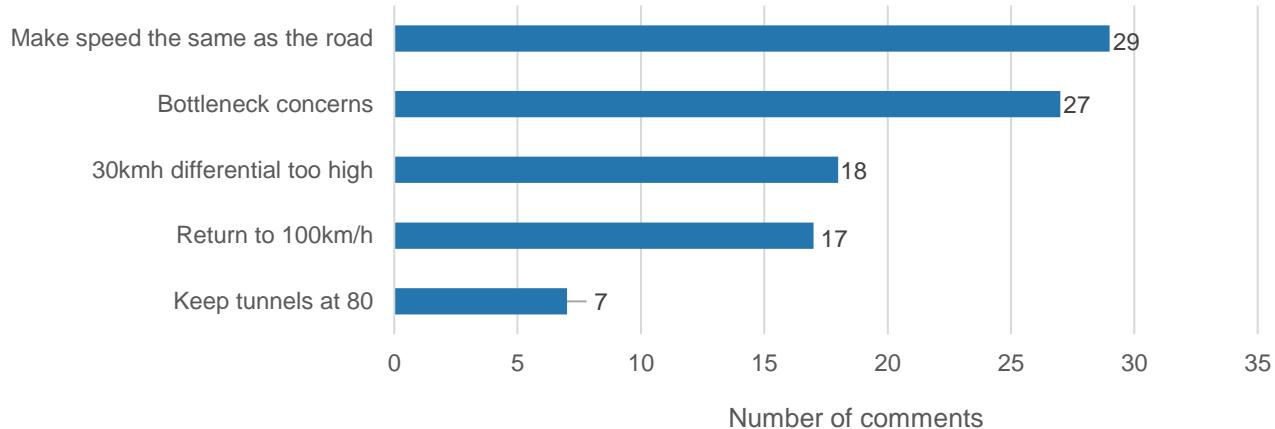
adding additional VSLs as part of the 110km/h implementation.

As with any changes made on our state highways, we continue to monitor the impact and may decide to make further required changes if necessary.

Feedback related to the Johnstones Hill Tunnels

While Johnstones Hill Tunnels were not included as part of the consultation, 1% of submitters shared their thoughts, primarily requesting the speed limit be raised in this area.

Key themes for speeds at the tunnels



Base. Comments specific to Johnstones Hill Tunnels

Examples of what we heard:

- “The tunnel should also be included it's ridiculous that it's 80.”
- “although I don't know how well drivers will slow down from 110 to 80 to go through the tunnel”

| Feedback theme | Our response |
|---|---|
| Speeds should be consistent across both motorways and the tunnel. | While the SH1 Johnstones Hill Tunnels are built to high safety standards, the enclosed environment within a tunnel creates a different safety risk to that of the surrounding motorway. At this stage we have no plans to review speed limits through the Johnstones Hill Tunnels. The speed limit through the tunnels is currently 80km/h due to the nature of the roading environment. This is a narrow space with more risk of a crash, and the lower speed limit reflects this. |
| A reduced speed limit through the tunnel will cause bottlenecks | Bottlenecks are caused by volume rather than speed of traffic. At this stage we have no plans to review speed limits through the Johnstones Hill |

Tunnels. The speed limit through the tunnels is currently 80km/h due to the nature of the roading environment. This is a narrow space with more risk of a crash; therefore, the lower speed limit reflects this.

How we used feedback to finalise our proposals

All submissions were reviewed, and the detailed feedback categorised into themes.

A team of Road Safety engineers, members of the speed management team, and communication and engagement representatives convened to review and fully understand the themes. The consultation feedback and themes, together with the completed technical assessments, has been used to inform the final speed limit recommendation that will go to the Director of Land Transport for approval.

Feedback within the scope of the consultation that impacts on the work of our partners will be passed on and discussed with them. For example, feedback received on speed limit enforcement will be discussed directly with NZ Police to help inform our approach going forward.

Feedback that didn't directly sit within the scope of the consultation (e.g. feedback relating to ongoing road maintenance) has also been captured and been passed on to the appropriate team.