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# Speed limit consultation: SH1 north and south of Kaikōura

January 2019

## Summary of process and outcome

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### 1. Background

In October 2018, the NZ Transport Agency sought public feedback about a proposal to permanently lower speed limits along sections of State Highway 1 (SH1) north and south of Kaikōura. The emergency speed limit of 80km/h was put in place along this route after the re-opening of SH1 (the highway had been closed as a result of damage from the 2016 Kaikōura earthquakes). An emergency speed limit of 80km/h in the areas north and south of Kaikōura was put in place for one year. The previous speed limits pre-earthquake were a mix of 100km/h and 80km/h. It was prudent to do a review and consultation of the speed limits prior to the emergency speed limits expiring on 15 December 2018.

### 2. Consultation process

The Transport Agency consulted on proposed speed limits for SH1 north and south of Kaikōura between 8 October 2018 and 2 November 2018, with an extension being given to some key stakeholders.

Consultation materials provided evidence that supported the proposed safe and appropriate speed limits on the highway. This included existing typical travel speeds (compared to the posted speed limit) and the history of crashes along the route that resulted in deaths and serious injuries. The rationale was given for the lowering of speed limits for each section of the route. The community was invited to comment on this rationale and provide information about any other factors the Transport Agency should consider when making the decision about the speed limits for these sections of road.

The consultation was advertised widely through social media, on the Transport Agency's website and also through three local district councils (Hurunui, Kaikōura and Marlborough District Councils). The local media also picked up the press release and resulted in articles in the *North Canterbury News*, *The Kaikōura Star* and the *Marlborough Express*. An article also appeared on Stuff and in *The Press*.

People were encouraged to submit their views either via an electronic form, email or on a hard copy form which was available at Hurunui, Kaikōura and Marlborough District Council outlets.

A public drop-in session was held at the Kaikōura Memorial Hall on 23 October 2018. The consultation documentation was also dropped into Kaikōura businesses, and a local Plunket meeting. It was also available at the Amberley A&P Show held on 27 October 2018.

### 3. Consultation questions

**1. Please provide feedback on the proposed speed limit for SH1 Kaikōura North - Coastal section from Waipapa Bay to Kiwa Road, Hapuku:**

- Current emergency speed limit: 80km/h
- Pre-earthquake speed limit: 100km/h
- Proposed speed limit: 80km/h
- Current typical speeds: 80-84km/h
- Rationale for proposed limit: Narrow corridor, bounded by railway and coast. Demanding section of SH1 with a high number of high-risk and out of context curves. High tourist / amenity area with a high demand for stopping.

**2. Please provide feedback on the proposed speed limit for SH1 Kaikōura South - 80km/h section to extend slightly to Kaikōura Airport to the north and to the Hundalee Hills to the south:**

- Current emergency speed limit: 80km/h
- Pre-earthquake speed limit: 100 and 80km/h
- Proposed speed limit: 80km/h
- Current typical speeds: 65-69km/h
- Rationale for proposed limit: Change in environment following straight, flat section of SH1 immediately south of Kaikōura. Coastal area with high number of out of context curves. Pre-earthquake was 80km/h posted speed - proposal for 80km/h section to extend slightly to Kaikōura Airport to the north and into the Hundalee Hills to the south.

**3. Please provide feedback on the proposed speed limit for SH1 Kaikōura South – Hundalee Hills:**

- Current emergency speed limit: 80km/h
- Pre-earthquake speed limit: 100km/h
- Proposed speed limit: 60km/h
- Current typical speeds: 55-59km/h
- Rationale for proposed limit: Steep, challenging section of the Hundalee Hills with a high number of vertical and horizontal curves, many posted at 25, 35 and 45km/h speed advisory.

**4. Please provide feedback on the proposed speed limit for SH1 Kaikōura South - Hundalee Hills to near Claverley Road, Conway Flat):**

- Current emergency speed limit: 80km/h
- Pre-earthquake speed limit: 100km/h
- Proposed speed limit: 80km/h
- Current typical speeds: 85-89km/h
- Rationale for proposed limit: Southern section of the Hundalee Hills containing a number of horizontal curves and steep vertical grade. Southern threshold change where SH1 is located on straight, flat terrain (obvious change in environment).

These sections have the following lengths:

- 1. SH1 Kaikōura North - Coastal section from Waipapa Bay to Kiwa Road, Hapuku:**
  - *from 1520m south of Papatea stream to 250m west of Kiwa Road (north of Kaikoura).*

2. **SH1 Kaikōura South - 80km/h section to extend slightly to Kaikōura Airport to the north and to the Hundalee Hills to the south:**
  - from 1.145km north of Waitane Road to 2.1km north of Claverley Road (south of Kaikōura).
3. **SH1 Kaikōura South – Hundalee Hills:**
  - from 980m south of Birches Road to 2090 north of Claverley Road.
4. **SH1 Kaikōura South - Hundalee Hills to near Claverley Road, Conway Flat).**
  - from to 2090m north of Claverley Road to 2040m south of Claverley Road.

#### 4. Summary of submissions

340 submissions were received from the public as well as submissions from stakeholder organisations.

A number of submissions included factors that were taken into consideration when setting the permanent speed limits, however no issues were identified that had not already been considered as part of previous detailed analysis of the route.

The main sentiment that came through was that respondents believed there had been significant investment in rebuilding SH1 after the earthquake so the speed limit should be 100km/h.

There was a belief that reduced speed limits would frustrate drivers and cause them to overtake in dangerous situations.

A number of people wanted more passing or slow traffic lanes put in and some were of the opinion that more signs were needed, especially at corners.

Another concern was regarding tourists and/or slow drivers being a problem on this road.

There was a concern that the reduced speed limits would cause congestion.

There were also many comments relating to other drivers being the issue and that more driver education was needed.

#### 5. Response to submissions

The Transport Agency is always looking for ways to improve the safety of our roads. The consultation feedback has been passed onto the relevant Transport Agency staff who will look into opportunities suggested by the public to improve the safety of this route.

We have addressed some of the specific feedback below:

- ***‘The road has been re-designed and improved at a huge expense and should remain at 100km/h limit.’***

A large portion of the investment used post-earthquakes was to repair the road where slips had occurred, repair structures and improving the resilience of the road to safeguard against further weather and seismic events. Due to the alignment of the route and its position in a coastal area, it has not been possible to engineer the route up to the level of safety for a 100km/h road.

Assessment of the speed limits to the north and south of Kaikōura using the methodology in the [Speed Management Guide](#) shows that the safe and appropriate speed is 80km/h for the coastal sections and 60km/h for the Hundalee Hills section. A check of average speeds driven in the north of Kaikōura are

already close to an 80km/h speed limit. As the topography south of Kaikōura is broadly the same, there is no reason to expect a different outcome.

- ***‘There are many trucks using this route and a lack of passing opportunities.’***  
Even though there are a number of passing bays, we will look into installing more slow-vehicle bays in the future.

- ***‘The 60km/h proposal will encourage slow drivers to drive even slower than 60km/h, and increase the number of frustrated drivers and dangerous driving.’***  
A review of average travel speeds shows people are typically driving at 55-59km/h along the Hundalee Hills section of the route. A number of the submissions noted that impatience was caused by drivers targeting the current limits being frustrated by drivers’ travelling at closer to the safe and appropriate speed. The 60km/h speed limit proposed will remove the encouragement for some drivers to target higher, unsafe speeds.

- ***‘Tourist drivers are the problem.’***  
The Transport Agency (and our road safety partners) continue to deliver the Visiting Driver project and work together on a variety of visiting drivers’ initiatives. While there has been a continued increase in visitor numbers, there has been relatively little change to the overseas driver crash statistics within New Zealand. Over the last five years (2013-2017) only 6.2 percent of fatal and serious injury crashes involved an overseas driver (note: while an overseas driver was involved in a crash, they were not necessarily at fault). You can find out more about the [Visiting Driver project](#) and [crash statistics involving overseas drivers](#).

## 6. Decision

The following are the recommendations the Transport Agency consulted on:

- North of Kaikōura; the coastal section of the road between Waipapa Bay to near Kiwa Road, Hapuku have a permanent speed set of 80km/h. Prior to the earthquake it was 100km/h.
- South of Kaikōura; Peketa to south of Claverley Road, Conway Flats.

This includes:

- a proposal for 80km/h section to extend slightly to Kaikōura Airport, Peketa to the north and into the Hundalee Hills to the south. This road was mainly 80km/h prior to the earthquake and the proposal is to extend the 80km/h at both ends.
- a section of SH1 in the Hundalee Hills reducing to 60km/h. Prior to the earthquake it was 100km/h.
- a section of the Hundalee Hills to just south of Claverley Road, Conway Flat to 80km/h.

The submissions did not identify any issues the Transport Agency had not already considered and addressed as a result of engaging with stakeholders.

The final decision was in line with the proposal; to reduce the speed limit to 80km/h on SH1 north and south of Kaikōura with a 60km/h limit on the Hundalee Hills. This change is in effect as of 15 December 2018.

### Map showing the new speed limits on SH1 Kaikōura

