



# SH1 TINWALD CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

Community engagement summary  
November 2021

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# 1. BACKGROUND

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is undertaking improvements on State Highway 1 (SH1) corridor through Tinwald from south of the Ashburton River Bridge to Graham Street.

The aim of this project is to provide improved and safer access and connection between east and west residential areas, by signalling the SH1/Agnes Street/Lagmhor Road intersection, redirecting traffic from Grahams Road to Agnes Street, and adding a right-turn bay into Grahams Road.

The changes will provide residents with safer access to amenities on either side of the highway, such as Tinwald School, the local shops, medical facilities and the Tinwald Domain.

The changes will also help to reduce delays, make travel times at the intersections more reliable, as well as improve access to Lake Hood and the Ashburton town centre, which is important as the Ashburton district is growing.

People in the community have told us they want to feel safer crossing and accessing the highway on foot, by bike or when driving a vehicle. We've heard that drivers using SH1 intersections are worried about crashes and are frustrated with lengthy delays at busy times. SH1 access from Lagmhor Road and Graham Street can be especially challenging.

This project aims to address these problems and improve access to the Tinwald business area and school.

The overall objectives of the project are to:

- Provide traffic signals at the SH1/Lagmhor Road/Agnes Street intersection, to make it easier for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists to cross or turn onto the highway.
- Encourage traffic away from Graham Street and instead to use McMurdo St and the traffic signals at Agnes St for turning right onto the highway.
- Make changes to Melcombe Street including two-way cycle route markings (encouraging a quieter route than the highway) and intersection changes at SH1.
- Provide a right turn bay from SH1 onto Graham Street.

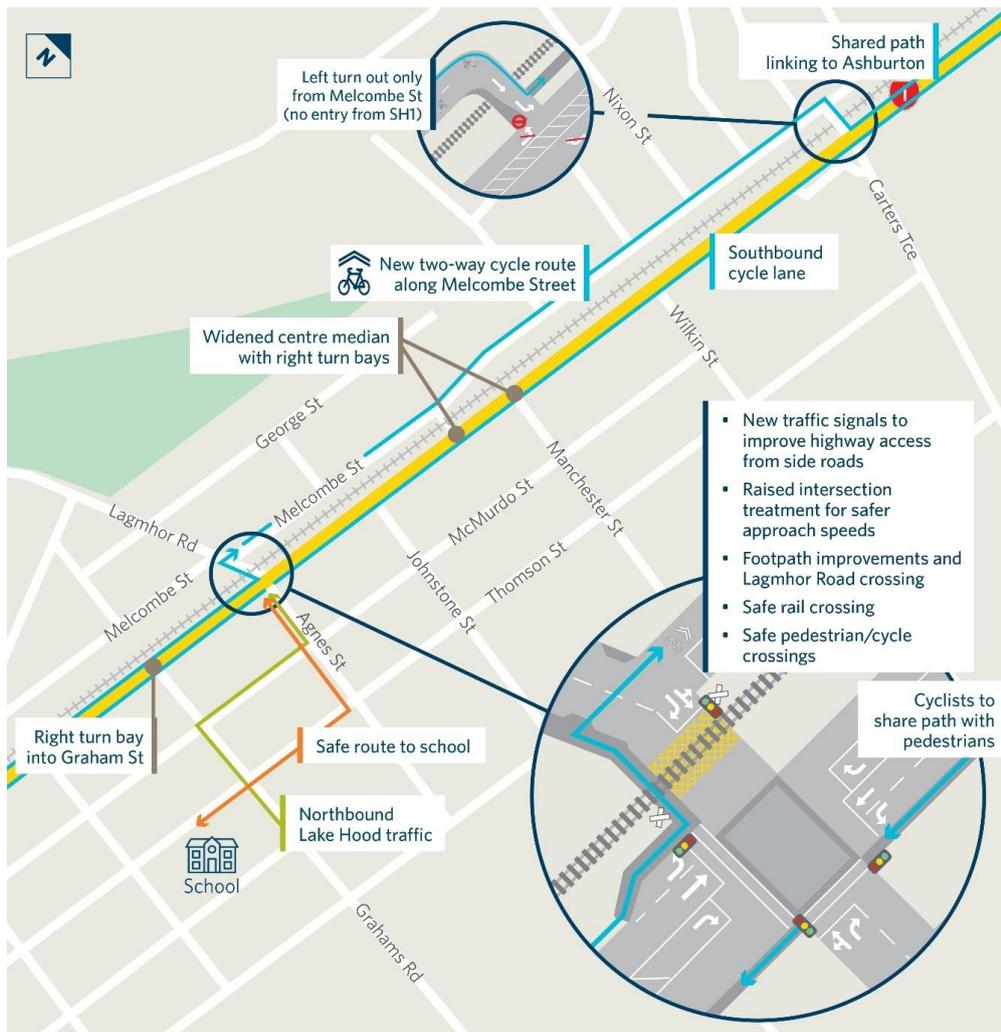
Engagement with partners, key stakeholders and the community has been undertaken since the project began in late November 2020 to help understand the different views and experiences that need to be considered within this transport corridor. The formal public consultation period ran from 12 March 2021 to 16 April 2021.

## **New Zealand Upgrade Programme**

Waka Kotahi is delivering this project as part of the New Zealand Upgrade Programme (NZUP), the government's \$8.7 billion investment in growing communities across the country.

People can look forward to transport improvements that provide more travel choices, help people get where they're going safely and grow our economy, while responding to the impacts of travel on the environment. Find out more at: [www.nzta.govt.nz/planning-and-investment/nz-upgrade/](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/planning-and-investment/nz-upgrade/)

## 2. MAP OF THE TINWALD PROJECT AREA



Map showing the SH1 Tinwald intersection improvements that was provided to the public during the community engagement period.

## 3. ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

From late November 2020, engagement activities included:

- A stakeholder workshop (7 December 2020) to introduce the project and seek early feedback from key stakeholders.
- Meetings with mana whenua (through Mahaanui Kurataiao Ltd, for all New Zealand Upgrade Programme (NZUP) projects and Aoraki Environmental Consultancy for Ashburton projects).
- Meetings with key stakeholders including Ashburton District Council staff and elected representatives, the acting Principal of Tinwald Primary School and commercial representatives including from Tinwald Tavern Complex, Z Energy Ltd, the Lake Hood Extension Trust and SuperValue supermarket.
- Public consultation activities from 12 March until 16 April 2021 included:
  - distribution of consultation brochure to Ashburton District Council, Ashburton Library, some local businesses and Tinwald School

- a pop-up community information event at Tinwald School (attended by around 150 people)
- Promotion of online engagement (Social Pinpoint map, email submissions) through Waka Kotahi and Ashburton District Council channels (social media and websites)
- Emails and telephone calls to stakeholders
- A media release (outlining the proposed improvements and details on how to give feedback).



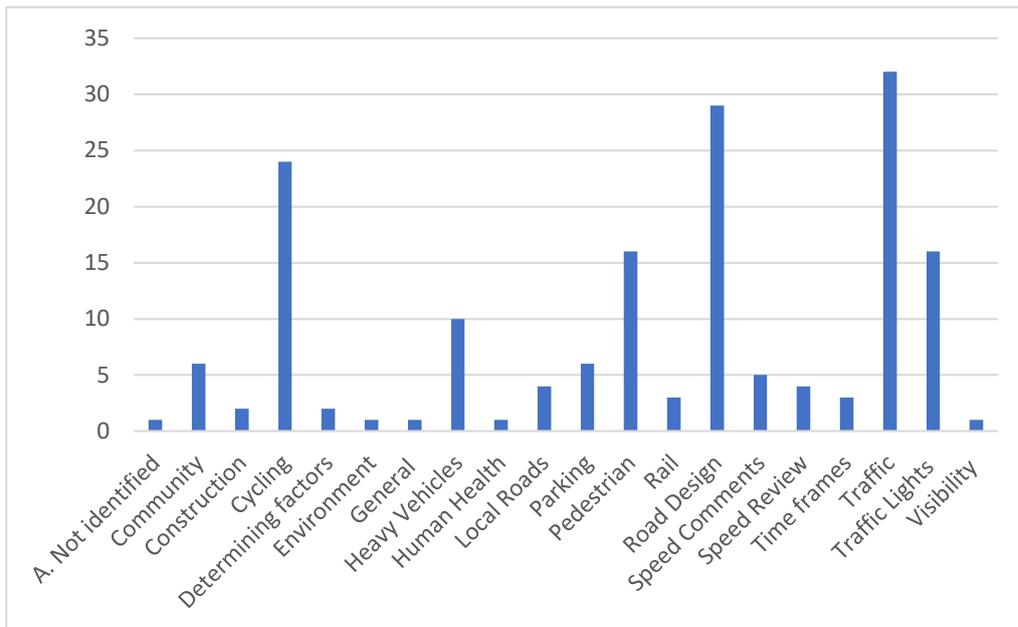
*A pop-up community information event was held on 23 March 2021 at Tinwald School Hall*

4.

## 4. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

There were 70 comments in total from the open day, 18 comments on Social Pinpoint, 20 FreePost and letter responses and 10 email responses. As well as feedback from members of the public, we received submissions from organisations and commercial entities including SuperValue Supermarket (Kim Holdings Limited), Tinwald Tavern, Z Energy Limited (and land owner), Tinwald Primary School, the AA (New Zealand Automobile Association), Ashburton District Council and the RTA (Road Transport Association of New Zealand).

The submissions included various concerns as well as positive comments. The top three concerns related to traffic, road design and cycling.



Graph showing issue categories and frequency in the responses

## 5. MAIN THEMES

The key themes that emerged during the public consultation are summarised below.

### Providing safe crossing points for pedestrians

People asked for safer crossings for pedestrians across SH1 at the Carters Terrace and retail/amenities sites, and for school students between Jane and Graham Streets.

*"Why can't another crossing be place[d] also on the other side of this intersection to give a safer crossing for these people so there is no need to cross Lagmhor Road."*

*"There needs to be safe access under the viaduct for pedestrians/cyclists, maybe by way of bollards marking off a pedestrian side."*

### Better provision for cyclists

Some said people on bikes would not use the Melcombe Street cycle route because it would be impractical and unsafe to get there. Others commented that while upgraded cycle facilities in Tinwald connecting to Ashburton bridge were welcomed, the cycle facility on the bridge itself was too narrow—particularly for mobility scooters, for example.

*"One slight problem is that you may need some islands to let cyclists from the east who want to go to Ashburton cross without having to go all the way down to the lights."*

*"Cyclists on the east side of Tinwald will not use Melcombe Street cycle lane as it is in the wrong side of the railway line"*

### Speed limit

There were a number of concerns about the speed limit south of Tinwald. Some people said the 70 km/h speed limit on SH1 should be changed to 50 km/h because of close calls and heavy vehicles speeding.

*"Reduction of speed in the southern zone from 70k to 50 past the Maronan Rd junction"*

*"Speed sign south end of Tinwald needs to be 50 till end."*

## Road design and street environment

Some feedback suggested that traffic lights should be installed at the Graham Street intersection instead of Agnes Street/Lagmhor Road. Others approved of the existing design concept to have the lights at the Agnes Street/Lagmhor Road intersection. The New Zealand Automobile Association and Ashburton District Council did not support a proposed raised intersection noting there were a large number of large vehicles using this intersection that would cause damage and noise disruption. Loss of street parking was raised as an issue by some businesses.

*"Best to put the lights on Grahams Rd - shortest distance."*

*"The ADC would be against any raised intersection or portion thereof as we believe this is unnecessary as a speed control and will cause unwelcome noise issues."*

*"...can clearly identify that there may need to be two free left-hand turning bays as suggested, from a heavy transports point of view, which would be an issue if overlooked."*

## Viaduct operation

Feedback on how the viaduct could operate was mixed. Some people appeared confused about the proposed two-way shared path and that turning restrictions were for vehicles only.

*"The proposal to change the Tinwald viaduct to a one way system is a very bad idea."*

*"Shutting the viaduct to southbound traffic will help Carters Terrace corner"*

## Highway access and safety

There was support for making the current highway safer and more accessible.

*"Sensible decision to move 2 way cycling route along Melcombe St."*

*"Overall. Very good. Feel something to help traffic turning right from Grahams Rd toward town (all the Lake Hood traffic should not have to divert down McMurdo)"*

# 6. SOME WAKA KOTAHI RESPONSES TO FEEDBACK

## Lagmhor Road

A left turn slip lane from Lagmhor Road was not included because of safety concerns related to giving way, entry speeds and angles as well as the limited length available from the limit line to the rail tracks. Furthermore, most traffic is turning left anyway and traffic signals would ensure left turning traffic can clear the intersection safely.

A northern pedestrian crossing on Lagmhor Road was initially considered and not included for the following reasons:

- Constraints in crossing the railway line
- The low number of people crossing at this point
- The project objective being a safer route to school
- A single signalised crossing is an improvement on what is there currently
- longer waiting times for left turning traffic, which would cause congestion.

A refuge crossing on Lagmhor Road for pedestrians and cyclists – in addition to a single path rail crossing with safety barriers – was determined as being the better overall solution.

In-depth traffic modelling shows that queuing on Lagmhor Road (and all approaches), including the right turn from Lagmhor at peak times can be accommodated.

### **Graham Street and location of traffic signals**

Graham Street is the primary access to Lake Hood, while Lagmhor Road and Agnes Street was identified as the best location for the traffic signals as this is the safest position for crossing the highway and rail line and serves access from both west and east Tinwald.

Minor improvements will be made to the right-turn bay at Graham Street and because the signals will create gaps in traffic, there will be more opportunities for turning right, which will help to improve travel times.

As well as providing room for the southbound cycle lane and wider centre median, removing some parking between Agnes and Graham Streets will help improve visibility and safety for people exiting side roads and making the traffic signals operate more efficiently.

Off-street parking is provided for at the shopping centre and close by on local streets. (The land opposite the shopping centre near the rail line is privately owned and is not considered for car parking.)

### **Agnes Street**

Our traffic analysis shows relatively low volumes of local road traffic will be redirected via McMurdo Street to Agnes Street. We will undertake some pavement strengthening at intersections. Any further restrictions to on-street parking at local street intersections (e.g. for pedestrian crossing safety or vehicle tracking purposes) will be explored with Ashburton District Council.

### **Pedestrians**

A Barnes Dance would not be suitable at this location due to the low pedestrian volumes and a longer wait for traffic at the signals (which would cause congestion). Having pedestrian crossings on two legs of the intersection help to improve the efficiency of the traffic signals.

Redirecting traffic to Agnes St will help split traffic between Agnes and Graham Streets and will help to create more gaps in traffic for people using the intersections.

The safe route to school will be promoted as Agnes and Thomson Streets with improved signage and path marking.

### **Cyclists, shared path and bus stop users**

The cycle improvements on Melcombe Street will improve access for west Tinwald residents travelling to and from Ashburton. Cyclists heading to Ashburton from the east side of Tinwald are encouraged to use the local streets (Thomson) to access Carters Terrace and the shared use path on the east side of the bridge. Coming southbound from Ashburton there will still be a cycle lane for people to use if they wish.

Locating the shared path through the grassed reserve area was rejected in a community workshop because people noted it didn't connect with many places, unless they can cross the state highway. They said they preferred the path to be readily accessible for residents all along Melcombe Street, and not be limited by the three rail crossings.

The final form of the cycle facility and speed management or calming treatments along Melcombe Street will be discussed with Ashburton District Council and considered as possible urban design improvements.

The southbound cycle lane has been retained and widening for the median, as requested by the community.

The intercity bus stop outside Lizzie's Dairy is not affected by the proposed plans.

The safe route to school will be promoted as Agnes and Thomson Street and will use the existing Graham Street pedestrian crossing. Final design of pedestrian facilities for school students will be considered with Ashburton District Council.

### **Carters Terrace**

The southbound left turn into Carters Terrace will stay the same. (We won't be adding extra shoulder space for slowing while turning. This is standard for urban intersections in low (less than 70km/h) speed environments with few people turning.

This will be safer for people riding bikes and heading south, who will exit the shared path onto the on-road cycle lane. Furthermore, shifting the pedestrian refuge north of Carters Terrace will be safer as turning drivers will have more distance to see people on bikes.

### **Right turns onto the highway**

Right turns at Carters Terrace will be possible – but not encouraged – due to the proximity to the bridge and there being fewer gaps in traffic. The team decided not to physically prevent right turns here (with a raised median for example) because this would make other turns difficult and alternative routes would require some back-tracking, which would be inconvenient for people.

People from east Tinwald are encouraged to use Wilkin Street and use the widened flush median for turning right. Driver advice on how to safely use a flush median for turning will be developed and promoted, when construction of the new road layout is nearing completion.

### **McMurdo Street**

We have checked and longer vehicles such as trucks and trailers will have adequate space to turn and access Agnes Street from McMurdo Street.

### **Four-lanes**

A State Highway through a community can act as a severance barrier.

Having four lanes of highway through Tinwald would make crossing and accessing both sides of the town challenging, and this would have a negative impact on the community.

Future plans for added highway resilience through Tinwald involve a second bridge to the east that aligns with Chalmers Avenue and will provide alternative access from Lake Hood to Ashburton. Ashburton District Council is undertaking a separate business case for this project.

In the meantime, the Tinwald corridor improvements will make it easier and safer for people to cross the state highway and rail line and to provide more travel choices such as cycling, which will improve community connection.

### **Viaduct**

Ashburton District Council proposed to restrict traffic turning at the viaduct some years ago. The project team will look at signage for northbound campervans to avoid any height clearance issues.

### **Road surface quality**

The project team will identify areas where the road surface needs improving and we will work with Ashburton District Council to remedy this.

## Community growth

Our traffic modelling took into account the expected population growth of Lake Hood and southwest area.

## Comments on other projects and/or out-of-scope

We received some feedback that was outside the scope of this project or related to other projects. These were passed to the relevant organisations/project teams. Projects or topics of note included:

- Relocating or installing new highway refuge islands. We tested this with some stakeholders who said people tend to cross from where they park and are unlikely to go to a refuge, and that refuges cause issues for people needing to access their driveways. Furthermore, the widened flush median will enable people to cross in stages.
- Feedback on traffic speeds at south Tinwald will be considered by Waka Kotahi. Speed reviews are prioritised in locations around the country where there's greatest potential to preventing people from dying or being seriously injured on our roads.
- The second Ashburton bridge is a separate project underway with Ashburton District Council and is not included in NZUP budget and scope. This project relates to highway access and safety in Tinwald, specifically relating to the railway corridor and Lagmhor Road. A second bridge is a longer-term option being investigated as part of the National Land Transport Plan, to support local access and highway resilience.
- Widening of the shared use path on the Ashburton Bridge. This suggestion has had a preliminary investigation and will be raised with the relevant teams within Waka Kotahi.

## 7. NEXT STEPS

We have considered all feedback, together with our ongoing investigations. We expect to have a recommended option to share with the community later in 2021.