



# SH73 WEST MELTON SPEED REVIEW

Summary of the speed review consultation

WAKA KOTAHI NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY

JULY 2020

## 1. BACKGROUND

In October and November 2019, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency formally consulted with stakeholders and the public on proposed speed limit changes on State Highway 73 in West Melton.

There has been ongoing community demand for lower speed limits on the roads. There has been significant development in the area, both in residential and commercial activities, and this has resulted in more pedestrian and cycling activity as well as an increase in traffic numbers.

This route is included in the top 10% of the Canterbury regional roading network which would result in the greatest reduction in death and serious injury by making speed limits safer.

Over the last ten years (2009-2018), there have been 14 crashes on this road, with one of the crashes causing injury.

## 2. CONSULTATION PROCESS

Prior to undertaking the formal consultation process, we completed numerous steps, including a speed management technical assessment of the road. This identified the speed limit on the road in this area was not safe and appropriate for the current road characteristics and roadside environments.

Prior to formal consultation with the public, engagement was undertaken with stakeholders including the Selwyn District Council, the West Melton District Residents Association, the Police, the AA, the Road Transport Forum and various local businesses. Feedback from these groups indicated wide support for the lowering of the speed in West Melton, and there was also considerable concern expressed about safety at the Weedons Ross Road / SH73 intersection.

Consultation materials provided evidence that supported the proposed safe and appropriate speed limit. This included current travel speeds and the characteristics of the road.

The consultation was advertised through social media, on the Transport Agency's website and in the 'Selwyn Times' and 'Western News'. A media release was issued and resulted in considerable media coverage.

People were able to submit their views through the electronic form, hard copy submission form, via email or by ringing the Transport Agency on 0800 44 44 49.

## 3. CONSULTATION QUESTION

The consultation phase is used to seek any additional information from stakeholders or the public that will help inform the decision about the proposed speed limit changes.

During formal consultation we proposed a new speed limit and asked the public the following question "**Are there any other factors that we should consider when making our decision?**"

The factors that were taken into consideration when proposing the new speed limit are communicated in this document.

## 4. SUMMARY AND RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

We received 101 submissions. We appreciated the response from the community and thank all those who provided their feedback.

The majority of submitters supported the speed limit change as proposed. While some submissions only expressed an opinion about the proposed speed limits, many included factors for Waka Kotahi to take into consideration when setting the permanent speed limits for SH73 in West Melton. Community members felt strongly that the layout of the SH73/Weedons Ross Road intersection is an issue and many suggested installing a roundabout or traffic lights to help with traffic flow and the safety of all users.

While a number of submissions did include factors that were taken into consideration when setting the new permanent speed limit, a proportion of the submissions expressed only a general opinion about speed reviews. This included issues or concerns around calling for more signage or current signage to be moved further outside of West Melton in order to slow traffic down and make it safer for traffic entering the village.

The relevant factors that were expressed in the feedback from the public are summarised in the table below. The table outlines the main factors people raised in their submissions and our comments.

| Factors raised in submissions   | Waka Kotahi comment   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Change the speed limit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 submitters told us they felt the current speed limit is too fast</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This supports the proposal to reduce the speed limit through SH73 West Melton.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Intersections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some submitters mentioned the Weedons Ross Road Intersection. While the majority agree that a speed reduction would help, some community members feel that the layout of the intersection is also an issue and installing a roundabout or traffic lights would help with traffic flow and the safety of all users.</li> </ul>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is acknowledged there are safety concerns with the current intersection. Crown funding has now been provided through the NZ Upgrade Programme to signalise this intersection, which will improve safety for all road users at this intersection.</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Other safety improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members who use this road on a daily basis feel that the NZ Transport Agency need to install other safety features such as traffic lights or a roundabout. Some also feel there currently isn't enough infrastructure to keep pedestrians safe and want a crossing of some kind to be introduced along the route.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As noted above, Crown funding has now been provided through the NZ Upgrade Programme to signalise the SH73 Weedons Ross Rd intersection, which will improve safety for all road users at this intersection.</li> <li>There are currently two pedestrian refuges provided to help pedestrians cross SH73.</li> <li>A lower speed limit will improve safety for pedestrians as well as drivers. It will mean people walking have more time to see vehicles before they cross, while also giving drivers more time to see and react to pedestrians.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Reduce speed limit to 50km/h</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many locals were supportive of the speed reduction but feel that the speed limit should be further reduced to 50km/h in order to make the road as well as the Weedons Ross Road intersection much safer for local residents.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Township speed limits are set according to the level of development in the area around the road – this helps drivers to see why they need to adjust their speed and means they are more likely to follow the limit. The highway through West Melton has homes and some businesses but is not as densely built up as areas that have 50km/h speed limits. We assessed current travel speeds as part of our technical assessment and this revealed speeds in the order of 78-79km/h. Mean speeds in Megamaps are recorded as 75-79km/h. For this reason, it is likely to be difficult to get drivers to obey a 50km/h limit without additional infrastructure to help lower speeds. A 60km/h is consistent with other rural</li> </ul> |

| Factors raised in submissions   | Waka Kotahi comment  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Driver behaviour</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of submitters felt the speed limit shouldn't change as driver behaviour was the cause of crashes.</li> </ul> | <p>townships within the Canterbury region, which helps ensure drivers obey the new limit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speed is the difference between a correctable mistake and a fatal error. Every extra km/h increases the likelihood of someone having a crash. Regardless of what causes a crash, speed always plays a part. Everyone makes mistakes, but simple mistakes should not cost lives.</li> <li>To make New Zealand's roads safer, we are working on a Safe System. The Safe System approach requires considering and strengthening all parts of the system – roads and roadsides, speeds, vehicles and road use. To ensure that no one is killed or seriously injured on our transport network. By taking a system approach, if one part fails, other parts will still protect the people involved. Designing to protect people from crash forces means creating forgiving roads and roadsides; speeds where collisions are survivable; safer vehicles that prevent errors and protect the people inside and ensuring that all people on the road have the skill, knowledge and focus required to travel safely.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Traffic volumes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some submitters also felt that speed limits shouldn't change as traffic volumes were the main cause of crashes.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic volumes are not a factor in the setting of speed limits. Township speed limits are set according to the level of development in the area around the road. With the speed limit changes, we should see drivers travelling at more consistent speeds, reducing the need for overtaking. More consistent travel speeds can also improve traffic flow, as well as reducing crashes.</li> </ul>  |

## 5. DECISION

The table below shows the recommendation Waka Kotahi formally consulted on between 21 October to 15 November 2019.

The submissions did not identify any issues that Waka Kotahi had not already considered.

The outcome of the speed review was in line with the proposed speed limit change, and the permanent speed limit outlined below will come into effect on 12 October 2020.

Stakeholders will be notified by letter and the public are being notified via media release, newspaper advertising, and social media ahead of the new speed limit signs being installed and the new speed limit taking effect.

When the new speed limit takes effect, the area will be monitored to ensure the new permanent speed limit and supporting treatments are working effectively and to determine if any further changes are required.

The following new speed limit will apply from Monday 12 October 2020:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>SH73 West Melton</b> | <b>New speed limit from 12 October 2020</b> |
|-------------------------|---|

From 500m east of Weedons Ross Road to 470m west of Weedons Ross Road.

60km/h

# Map showing the permanent speed limit



## 6. SUBMISSIONS

You can view the submissions we received for this speed review [here](#).