

HDC Speed Limit Review 2020 Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay Submission

General Feedback

As an organization that advocates for cycling improvements in our region, we at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay are pleased to see that the majority of the proposals included in the draft statement are for the reduction of speed limits. Slower vehicle speeds increase driver reaction time, which leads to fewer collisions, and reduce the likelihood of fatalities or severe injuries when collisions do occur. We commend the Council for taking action to make our roads safer not just for cyclists, but for all road users.

However, proposals 4 and 31 are to increase speed limits. We oppose these increases for individual reasons which we have outlined under each proposal. We also oppose them on the general grounds that faster speeds create more dangerous road environments. Despite investment in the iWay network over the past decade, Hastings is still very much a community dominated by cars, with approximately 85 percent of people commuting to work by personal vehicle and over 50 percent of children being driven to school (according to census data collected for the Council's Active Transport Business Case). We still have a long way to go to achieve a truly "accessible range of safe transport options" and a network of safe walking and cycling facilities, as envisioned in the Hastings Long Term Plan. Increasing speed limits, except in very rare circumstances, is going in the wrong direction.

One omission from the review that we were disappointed to see was the reduction of speed limits in the Hastings CBD. Proposal 17 to reduce the Havelock North CBD speed limit to 30kmh justifies the proposal thus: "Implementing a 30kmh speed limit in other city centres has resulted in a reduction in injury crashes, especially those involving pedestrians, and an increased perception of traffic safety within the CBD for all users. This increased perception of traffic safety can create a more attractive CBD with greater freedom of movement." This reasoning applies equally to Hastings and we strongly believe that the Hastings District Council should consider a similar proposal for our city. As work is underway to achieve the vision of the City Centre Public Spaces Revitalization Plan, which aims to create "vibrant and distinctive spaces that attract people" (not cars), improving the safety and comfort of our streets for *people* should be paramount.

Proposal 3: Brookfields Rd - We suggest the Council consider a further reduction in the speed limit on Brookfields Road to 60kmh due to its popularity as a cycle route and the presence of the one-lane bridge over the Tutaekuri River. The road shoulders become considerably narrower leading up to the bridge, forcing cyclists and motorists to share the lane. According to Waka Kotahi's Crash Analysis System Data, there have been 67 traffic crashes on this small segment of road since 2000, three of which have been fatal, one of which was the death of a cyclist in 2017. Considering all of these factors, the Council should be proactive in protecting people's lives and safety by limiting speeds to 60kmh.

Proposal 4: Chatham Road (Flaxmere) - We at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay oppose the proposal to increase sections of Chatham Road in Flaxmere from 50kmh to 60kmh. This segment of Chatham Road connects the bike lane on Omaha Road to the Chatham Road bike lane (which begins west of the Flaxmere Avenue roundabout), both of which have speed limits of 50kmh. Increasing the speed limit on this small portion of Chatham Road--a mere 500 meters or so--will create an inconsistent traffic environment that is unfriendly to cyclists, and will have only a negligible benefit to vehicles, if any. The other roads which connect Flaxmere to Omaha Road (Wilson Road, Henderson Road, and Kirkwood Road) are proposed to have speed limits of 60kmh. The proposal states that there is a desire within the community to have the same speed limit for all four roads, but what benefit does this provide? In our view, creating a slower, safer traffic environment on at least one of these routes--which also happens to be a link between two bike lanes--is essential.

Proposal 6 and 7: Clifton Road - We at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay strongly support the proposal to reduce the speed limit on this section of Clifton Road to 80kmh, due to the mixed-mode nature of the area and access to amenities it provides, as noted in the draft statement. A slower speed limit will also create a safer and more comfortable environment for the adjacent pathway, which is currently separated from vehicle traffic by only a narrow grassy median.

Proposal 17: Havelock North CBD - We at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay strongly support the proposal to reduce the speed limits within the Havelock North CBD to 30kmh. Evidence from other cities suggests that not only will the lower speed result in a reduction in serious crashes, but will also support a vibrant city center and encourage more people to walk and ride bikes.

Proposal 29: Omaha Road - We at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay strongly support the proposal to reduce the speed limit on these segments of Omaha Road, where there are conventional bike lanes (a striped lane with no painted buffer or physical barrier), to 50kmh and 60kmh. Slower vehicle speeds will improve the safety and comfort of people using the bike lane.

Proposal 31: Pakowhai Road - We at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay oppose the proposal to increase the speed limit on this section of Pakowhai Road from 60kmh to 80kmh. Though much of Pakowhai Road is in a rural context, we believe this section is appropriately classified as urban by the Safer Journeys Risk Assessment Tool due to the high number of driveway and side road accesses, including the access to Pakowhai School off of Chesterhope Road. The intersection of Pakowhai Road and Brookfields Road is also relatively busy, as it is a popular route between Hastings and Napier. We agree with the Safe and Appropriate Speed designation of 60kmh. If traffic data suggests that motorists rarely adhere to the current 60kmh speed limit, we believe that greater enforcement is required.

Proposal 45: Tuki Tuki Rd - We at Cycle Aware Hawke's Bay strongly support the proposal to reduce the speed limit on Tuki Tuki Road. However, we disagree that the reduction should be

only to 80kmh. According to the proposal document, the Safe and Appropriate Speed for the route is 60kmh. It is also a popular cyclist route that is part of the iWay network, in addition to being a top ten percent site for Death and Serious Injury reduction. The reason for not reducing the speed limit to 60kmh, despite all of the supporting evidence, is that it will supposedly not be “easily achievable” due to the road’s “full rural outlook”. We do not believe this is a sufficient reason to risk people’s lives and safety. Rather than condoning an inappropriate speed for Tuki Tuki Road, we believe the Council should undertake efforts to enforce the recommended 60kmh, if compliance is an issue.