

16. SPEED LIMIT REVIEW 2000

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Brian Neill, Traffic Engineer
Corporate Plan Output: Traffic Signs and Markings	

The purpose of this report is to outline proposals to alter existing speed limits on roads in the Halswell area and along the new sections of the Woolston/Burwood Expressway (Anzac Drive) between Travis Road and Bexley Road near Wetlands Grove. Information has also been provided on a review on the speed limits along part of the Summit Road, Dyers Road and Travis Road. This report will also be considered by the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board and City Services Committee.

BACKGROUND

Residents of Hoon Hay Valley have written to Council seeking a review of the current open road speed limit along Hoon Hay Valley Road. New residential development in the Halswell area alongside Milnes Road and the new Living 1 zone centered on Nash Road has led to a review of a number of the rural roads in this part of the city. New Living zone designations in this and the Belfast area has led to a proposal to expand the current urban (50 km/h) zone to include new Living zone areas where subdivisional roads will be constructed over the next few years.

Within the 50 km/h urban speed limit zone there are many roads that are rural in nature. The Council's Traffic and Parking Bylaw lists 60, 80 km/h and speed limits under 50 km/h. 70 km/h speed limits are gazetted under existing traffic law. Proposals in the future will require the Council, as road controlling authority for the area, to gazette all speed limits in the city.

PROCESS

When changing speed limits on roads in the city, the Council must undertake rating assessments for roads under review using the Land Transport Safety Authority's (LTSA) RTS17 "Guidelines for Setting Speed Limits". The results of manual assessments are then checked with the LTSA computer programme "Speed Limits New Zealand".

The relevant data is then assessed and discussed with stakeholders including NZ Police, NZ AA, LTSA, TNZ and the Road Transport Forum.

The Council then needs to discuss the results of the speed limit assessments and promote the changes amongst local communities. Decisions must then be taken on the most appropriate speed limits for the roads being reviewed, appropriate gazette notices prepared by the LTSA and changes made to the fourth schedule (Bylaw Speed Limits) of the Council's Traffic and Parking Bylaw.

The timeframe for the process this year should be completed in time for the opening in July 2000 of the Travis Road to New Brighton Road section of Anzac Drive.

AFFECTED ROADS

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 1. | Anzac Drive between Travis Road and New Brighton Road (new road) | 80 km/h |
| 2. | Anzac Drive between New Brighton Road and Wainoni Road (new road) | 80 km/h |
| 3. | Anzac Drive Wainoni Road to Pages Road (future road) | 80 km/h |
| 4. | Anzac Drive Pages Road to Bexley Road near Wetlands Grove (future road) | 80 km/h |
| 5. | Milnes Road | 70 km/h |
| 6. | Sutherlands Road | 80 km/h |
| 7. | Cashmere Road (from Kennedy's Bush Road to near Happy Home Road) | 80 km/h |
| 8. | Hoon Hay Valley Road (from Cashmere Road for 800 m) | 80 km/h |
| 9. | Hoon Hay Valley Road (800 m from Cashmere Road to end) | 50 km/h |

The above proposals are included in a map of Christchurch City Speed Limits which will be tabled at the meeting.

SUMMIT ROAD

The Committee will be aware of a request from Councillor Erin Baker who asked that the Committee consider the appropriateness of the existing 70 km/h speed limit along the Summit Road. At its meeting on 6 July 1999, the City Services Committee considered a report on the reasons for adopting a 70 km/h speed limit along the Christchurch City sections of the Summit Road between Godley Head and Gebbies Pass. Although there was some support for the retention of the 70 km/h speed limit as a practical maximum speed for most drivers, the Committee, in reaffirming its support for the current 70 km/h speed limit along the Summit Road, did so "*subject to the implementation of work to remedy the road deficiencies identified in the current safety audit, including the erection of suitable sign to advise motorists of the likely presence of joggers and cyclists where appropriate*".

The Council, at its meeting in July 1999, decided "*that the recommendation lie on the table until appropriate speed checks have been made on the aforementioned section of the Summit Road, and that the results be supplied to the City Services Committee*".

Various actions have been taken to remedy road deficiencies identified in the safety audit that was carried out by Opus International Ltd for the City Streets Unit. The audit team suggested that a posted speed limit of 50 km/h may influence better driver behaviour due to the roading environment, the presence of pedestrians and cyclists on the roadway, the possibility of wandering stock and the scenic nature of the route.

When the possibility of lowering the speed limit was suggested (July 1999), it was felt that we should wait for the Summer months before conducting speed surveys. Unfortunately, even during peak weekend periods of the day, few motor vehicles travel along the Summit Road. The average daily total for traffic along the Summit Road between the Sign of the Kiwi and Mount Pleasant Road is 300 vehicles per day. Over a four hour period on a fine Sunday afternoon in the middle of March 138 vehicle speeds were recorded. During a two hour period of a fine Monday afternoon 36 vehicles were recorded travelling along the section of the Summit Road between Bridle Path and Castle Hill.

The overall average speed of vehicles was 50 km/h with an 85th percentile of 56 km/h. The drivers of only 12 vehicles exceeded the posted 70 km/h limit.

A “car following” exercise was also carried out on a Sunday afternoon. This tended to indicate that most people were driving to the road conditions rather than to a speed limit. Most drivers were travelling along the Summit Road respecting the road environment and keeping speeds well within the 50 – 60 km/h range. On some of the straight sections between bends a few drivers accelerated to approximately 80 km/h where the road environment opened up and was clear of all other traffic.

Discussions have been held with the Summit Road Protection Society on the placement of appropriate pedestrian (PW-29), cyclists (PW-35), Stock (PW-37 or PW-37.1) and Winding Road Next “...” km (PW-24) permanent warning signs recommended as part of the safety audit. It is understood that the society is relaxed about the retention of the 70 km/h speed limit, agrees with the need to sign some of the sharp bends in the road and provide signs advising of the presence of pedestrians, cyclists and stock.

Appropriate signs will be erected along the Summit shortly. The crash rate will continue to be monitored and action taken to eliminate “black spots” as the need arises.

The Summit Road, along with other rural roads in the city would usually have an open road speed limit. In the case of the Summit Road, 70 km/h was chosen as a maximum practical speed limit and agreed to by the LTSA. It is recommended that the existing 70 km/h speed limit along the Summit Road be retained.

SETTING SPEED LIMITS

The setting of speed limits in New Zealand is based on road controlling authorities being able to assess ratings on a roadside development basis. This process has been followed in the assessment of the speed limits under review which broadly fall into the following categories:

- 100 km/h is the general open road rural speed limit.
- 80 km/h is the speed limit on some local and arterial rural roads and is often used as a route speed limit on roads linking urban areas.
- 70 km/h is the speed limit along roads where there is urban development along one side only abutting rural areas and along short sections of rural road linking with urban 50 km/h speed limit areas.
- 60 km/h is the speed limit along selected arterial routes where there is a high standard of road geometry and is often used as a route speed limit in urban areas.
- 50 km/h is the general urban speed limit.

A report on a review of a number of speed limits on existing roads and proposed roads in the city was prepared by Atoni Facey Consulting will be tabled at the meeting. The report covers all of the above proposals and was used as a basis for discussions with the NZ Police, NZ AA, LTSA, TNZ and the Road Transport Forum.

CONCLUSION

Assessments for lowering speed limits on roads in the Halswell area (Milnes Road, Sutherlands Road, Cashmere Road (part) and Hoon Hay Valley Road) are tabled. The setting of an 80 km/h speed limit along the new sections of Anzac Drive are proposed along with the extending of the urban (50 km/h) speed limit to areas recently designated as Living zones in the Council's City Plan.

Following initial consideration by Community Boards and the City Services Committee it is proposed to circulate the proposals to the relevant communities and bring back the results of the consultation process to Community Boards, the City Services Committee and the Council in May 2000. Bylaw and Gazette Notice procedures are to be completed by the end of July so that the appropriate speed limit can be posted on the Travis Road to New Brighton Road section of Anzac Drive when it is opened to traffic.

Recommendation: That the Board consider the above proposals to alter speed limits on selected existing and proposed roads in the city and make appropriate recommendations to the City Services Committee.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: For discussion, and comment to City Services Committee.