



8. AVONHEAD SCHOOL – VARIABLE SPEED LIMIT

General Manager responsible:	General Manager, City Environment Group, DDI 941-8608
Officer responsible:	Unit Manager, Transport and Greenspace
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to request that the Board endorse the installation of a new variable speed limit (40 kilometres per hour school speed zone) on Avonhead Road, at Avonhead School (refer **Attachment 1**), and that the Board recommend to the Council that it approve the new variable speed limit and include it in the Christchurch City Council Register of Speed Limits.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Council has a commitment to improve road safety. Reducing excessive vehicle speeds where appropriate, outside schools during peak arrival and departure periods improves the safety for children. The Council has a programme of installing 40 kilometres per hour variable speed limits (known as “school zones”) outside schools according to a prioritisation process. This process, (including the methodology behind it) was recently endorsed again by the Council as the most appropriate method of improving road safety outside certain schools. Avonhead School currently has the next highest priority, following zones already commissioned. To date 35 schools have benefited from this treatment. The “school zone” can operate on school days, for a period of no more than 45 minutes in the morning before the start of school and for a period no more than 30 minutes in the afternoon, beginning no earlier than five minutes before the end of school. The “school zone” can also operate for a period of 10 minutes at any other time when children cross the road, or enter or leave vehicles at the roadside.
3. The Council can resolve to set new variable speed limits, in accordance with the Christchurch City Council Speed Limits Bylaw and the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2003. Accordingly infrastructure for these variable speed limits cannot be commissioned until they have been formally resolved by the Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4. The estimated cost for this school zone is \$40,000 and will be funded from an existing approved budget.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?

5. The recommendations of this report align with 2009-19 Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) budgets.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

6. The proposed variable speed limit complies with the conditions specified and published by the Director of the New Zealand Transport Agency in the *New Zealand Gazette* (21/4/2011, No. 55, p. 1284) approving a variable speed limit of 40 kilometre per hour in school zones and setting out conditions for those speed limits. A copy of that notice is attached (**Attachment 2**). Council resolution is required to implement the speed limit restrictions and traffic management changes.
7. The Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2003.
8. The Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices 2004.
9. Christchurch City Council Speed Limits Bylaw 2010.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

10. As above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

11. This report's recommendations support the project objectives as outlined in the 2009-19 LTCCP.
12. This project aligns with the Transport and Greenspace Units' "Our Community Plan 2009-2019".

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

13. This project is consistent with key Council strategies including the Road Safety Strategy and the Pedestrian Strategy.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

14. As above.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

15. Before the Council can set a variable speed limit pursuant to Clause 5(1) of the Christchurch City Speed Limits Bylaw 2010, the public consultation requirements set out in Section 7.1 of the Land Transport Rule Setting of Speed Limits 2003 Rule 54001 must be complied with. Section 7.1(2) provides that the persons who must be consulted before the Council sets a speed limit are:
 - (a) road controlling authorities that are responsible for roads that join, or are near, the road on which the speed limit is to be set or changed;
 - (b) a territorial authority that is affected by the existing or proposed speed limit;
 - (c) any local community that the road controlling authority considers to be affected by the proposed speed limit;
 - (d) the Commissioner of Police;
 - (e) the Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated;
 - (f) the Chief Executive Officer of the Road Transport Forum New Zealand;
 - (g) other organisation or road user group that the road controlling authority considers to be affected by the proposed speed limit; and
 - (h) The Director of Land Transport New Zealand now the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA).
16. Section 7.1(3) of the Rule states a road controlling authority must consult by writing to the persons in 7.1(2) advising them of the proposed speed limit and giving them a reasonable time, which must be specified in the letter, to make submissions on the proposal. In terms of Section 7.1(2)(a) and 7.1(2)(b) there are no road controlling authorities or territorial authorities that are required to be consulted in respect of any of the proposed variable speed limits.
17. Representatives of the Commissioner of Police, the Director of NZTA, the Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated, the Taxi Federation and the Chief Executive Officer of the Road Transport Forum of New Zealand have received written advice of the proposed new variable speed limit in accordance with Section 7.1(2) (d), (e), (f) and (h). No other organisation or road user group is considered to be affected by the proposed speed limits. No neighbouring road controlling authority is affected.
18. A spokesperson for the New Zealand Transport Agency supported the proposed variable speed limits outside Avonhead, Roydvale and Heathcote Valley Schools. He noted that they meet all the requirements of the warrant as set out in Traffic Note 37 Section 4. The schools exceed the requirement of 50 children crossing the road or entering a vehicle, and have traffic speeds above the requirements and/or are on a main traffic route.

19. A consultation plan was circulated to 60 residents in Avonhead Road on 22 November 2011. In most cases the Consultation Leader spoke to property owners near proposed school speed signs. The school also provided details to the school community via its newsletter.
20. The Chairperson of the Ilam and Upper Riccarton Residents' Association supports the introduction of a school speed zone for Avonhead Road. She said that motorists need warning that a school crossing is approaching, especially on major connecting roads such as Avonhead Road.
21. Responses were received from two residents who both supported the proposed school speed zone. However, one respondent was concerned about a dip in the road which he felt would reduce the visibility of the sign outside his property. Traffic engineers have since revisited the site and believe that the sign will be clearly visible.
22. Avonhead School administrators support the installation of a variable speed limit outside their school and are prepared to operate it.
23. Those who made comments were sent a copy of the plan for Council approval, and a letter outlining the project team's responses to their suggestions and concerns. They were also advised of the Community Board meeting date and time, and how to contact the Board Adviser if they wished to seek speaking rights.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board recommend that the Council approve:

- (a) the installation of a 40 km/hr variable speed limit on Avonhead Road (school zone), as meets the requirements of Section 7.1 of the Land Transport Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2003, and the New Zealand Gazette notice (21/04/2011, Number 55, page 1284), including the times of operation.
- (b) subject to Council approving recommendation (a), that pursuant to Clause 5(1) of the Christchurch City Speed Limits Bylaw 2010, a variable speed limit (40 kilometres per hour School Speed zone) apply on:
 - (i) Avonhead Road, commencing at a point 30 metres south westerly of the Parkstone Avenue intersection and extending in a south westerly direction for a distance of 375 metres;
- (c) subject to the Council approving recommendation (a), that the abovementioned variable speed limit shall come into force on completion of infrastructure installation, and public notification.

BACKGROUND

24. Avonhead School is currently second equal on the Council's prioritisation list for installation of new school speed zones. This process ranks each road fronting a school by scoring the following 10 factors: road classification (i.e. local, major arterial etc), traffic volume, traffic speed, road environment (distractions, visibility etc), community interest, kerbside activity, number of children crossing the roadway, cyclist volume, percentage of trucks, and whether a school patrol exists. There are 293 frontage roads at the 162 schools in the Christchurch City area.
25. Two options were considered by the project team. The first and preferred option is to install a 40 kilometre per hour variable speed limit using electronic and static signage that operates outside Avonhead School before and after school during the school term. The other option is to maintain the status quo. The school is keen to see a speed zone installed in Avonhead Road to improve safety for pupils.