

Ōrākei Local Board's Feedback on Proposed Speed Limits Bylaw 2019

General Points:

- The Ōrākei Local Board supports in principle the intention of Auckland Transport's speed management plan to improve safer interactions between vehicles and other vulnerable road users through reduction of vehicle speeds in and around town centres.
- The Board supports the use of driver feedback signs to encourage safe driving along Tāmaki Drive.
- The Board is opposed to unnecessary pedestrian crossings and speed tables being installed as means of enforcing the proposed new speed limit. Any speed tables/threshold treatments installed on Tamaki Drive must be designed to ensure safe navigability for cyclists.
- The Board is concerned that the infrastructure changes proposed for local centres is not going to be publicly consulted widely and visibly, and that this should have formed part of, and been run in conjunction with, the speed reduction consultation.
- The Board is very concerned over the extreme loss of parking for both Mission Bay and St Heliers town centres that will be the outcome of implementing the proposed infrastructure changes to support safer speeds and does not support the extent of the proposed changes.
- It is noted that there are existing speed limit zones around schools set at 40km/hr for safety reasons. There is an inconsistency in proposing a different speed limit for those same safety reasons in town centres, and the two speeds should be aligned.
- The proposed speed reductions may be useful to manage safety in busier road-use times or facilitate traffic flow / public transport etc. However, the Board questions the need to retain reduced speed measures 24/7. That sort of regime does not even exist for bus lanes and clearways. Having speeds retained at 50km/hr from 9pm-7am seems reasonable.

Town Centres:

Mission Bay:

Slip Rd – Selwyn Reserve

The Board has safety concerns about the slip road which being part of the Selwyn Reserve, and adjacent to the signalized intersection at Tamaki Drive and Patteson Avenue, has high volume of pedestrian and vehicle usage – including regular tourist buses. It is important that any infrastructure or design changes proposed for Mission Bay Town Centre include consideration of this area for safety improvements. Given that this slip road is within the legal boundary of the Selwyn Reserve, and that the Ōrākei Board may at a later stage consider whether it should be physically incorporated back into the Reserve, Auckland Transport need to take this into consideration. Auckland Transport cannot assume that this road will continue to form part of the road network at this location indefinitely.

A major development, with a mix of retail, hospitality, commercial and residential housing has recently been proposed for the block extending from Patteson Avenue along Tamaki Drive east towards Selwyn Ave. This will have significant impact on the traffic movements in the

Mission Bay Town Centre and needs to be considered as part of any road infrastructure change.

Mission Bay is an extremely popular recreation destination point, particularly during summer months for not only local visitors but an increasingly number of tourists both national and international. Large scale removal of parking facility will impact heavily on locals and visitors alike.

St Heliers:

The Board is deeply disappointed that the speed limit consultation has not included reference to, or enabled feedback on, the substantial infrastructure changes particularly in St Heliers Village that support of 30km/hr will mandate.

The loss of upwards of 32 car parking spaces in the St Heliers Village and the detrimental impact this will have on the St Heliers business community is unacceptable. As a Board we have received mixed feedback from the wider community regarding the proposed speed limit reduction, but the feedback with respect to the multiple and wide-ranging road infrastructure changes in the St Heliers Village/Town Centre which will be implemented to give effect to the speed reduction measures is very clear. These changes - in particular the loss of the substantial number of car parking spaces - have been very strongly opposed by local residents and businesses. When the New Bus Network for the central region was implemented in July 2018, new bus stops and layover points were installed in or near the St Heliers Town Centre resulting in the net loss of 8 carparks. Considerable concern was expressed at the time of consultation on these recent works by the St Heliers Residents' and Business Associations that even this amount of car parking loss would have severe impact - not only on the convenience aspect for a predominantly elderly catchment of visitors who use the shops, doctors' rooms, public library, and other amenities provided by the centre - but also the ongoing economic viability of the commercial area itself. It is a further blow to this community to be facing the magnitude of car parking removal these works would entail.

Although Auckland Transport emphasises the priority of safety for all road users in these proposals, in some of these commercial and nearby residential streets the movement of buses for repositioning for route changes, is creating significant danger for pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists. Despite the Board raising these matters with Auckland Transport the responses have not focussed on any element of safety but have instead the need to ensure protection of the bus paintwork and the need to avoid delays due to other road users. The proposed infrastructure changes to the Village will only exacerbate this problem with the buses.

The Board does not support the large number of additional pedestrian crossings within the Village centre itself, but does support the installation of two new pedestrian crossings at either end of that part of Tamaki Drive which is proposed for a reduced speed limit. It strongly supports proposed changes to the problematic intersection at Tamaki Drive/Vale Road/Lombard Street/Cliff Road to enable safer pedestrian access to St Heliers beach and the very popular and well used playground adjacent.

If the 30km/hr reduced speed is imposed, The Board considers an extension to the reduced speed zone to include Benbow Street through to Tuhimata Street, and along St Heliers Bay Road from Polygon Street up to Devore Street would be appropriate.

Singling out the two areas of St Heliers and Mission Bay on the basis of dubious interpretation of the statistics while other similar areas such as Ellerslie and Remuera townships are excluded, is inconsistent and anomalous.

Meadowbank:

Feedback has been received from some communities in our Local Board area that they would welcome a lower speed limit through their town centres. Meadowbank St Johns Residents' Association for example recently requested a temporary trial of 30 km/hr on St Johns Road

from the Meadowbank Shopping Centre to the intersection of St Johns Road with Meadowbank Road.

Consultation Process:

The Board has been concerned with the manner in which the speed limit reduction proposal has been presented to the public in the consultation process. It is disingenuous in particular, to separate the consultation on the speed limit reduction from the consultation on the proposed changes to the roading environment in both Mission Bay and the St Heliers Village. The two matters, although being consulted on separately are inextricably linked. We note with concern the recommendations in the AECOM report to Auckland Transport that the means of ensuring the adherence to any proposed speed limit reduction should be through the creation of the “self-explaining/ self-enforcing” road environment involving substantial changes to roading infrastructure and the removal of upwards of 32 carparks. Auckland Transport should be considering the option of simply reducing the speed limit, and then using normal enforcement process to enforce it. It is the Board’s view that failure to separate the two components ie the reduction of speed, and the substantial traffic calming devices, is misleading as it is not apparent to the members of the public giving support to the speed reduction that this may then be used as a mandate by Auckland Transport to also implement the built roading infrastructure changes to the St Heliers Village, and Mission Bay town centres.

It is entirely possible to have either a lower speed limit without the proposed infrastructure, or the proposed infrastructure without a lower speed limit. They are not necessarily both required. In St Heliers there is already very little capacity to drive any faster than approximately 30km/hr in any event during normal business hours when there is more likelihood to have the minor vehicle incidents which forms the basis for the report’s recommendations.

AECOM REPORT to Auckland Transport:

The Board challenges the accuracy of the observations and conclusions of the AECOM report and notes with concern that there are so many errors of fact within, its value as an informative tool must be questioned.

Some specific examples of those inaccuracies are as follows:

- 2.2** Reference is made to “high speeds” being regularly observed along Polygon Road at the Turua Street / St Heliers Bay Road intersections. The lack of definition as to what the authors consider “high speed” results in this comment being of limited value.

Comment in the report is made that right turning vehicles into Polygon Road from Goldie Street are travelling at ‘inappropriate speed’. Again this lacks sufficient definition. The turning capacity is severely restricted by existing build-outs and the Board challenges this observation. Vehicles customarily come to a standstill before navigating in and out of Polygon Road at this intersection, given not only the limited available space, and proximity of parked cars and other vehicles waiting to make their turn.

- 2.6** The statement that there is “time-based pay and display” parking on Tamaki Drive is incorrect. There is currently no metered parking along Tamaki Drive. The Board is opposed to the installation of “pay and display” machines in the commercial areas of St Heliers and Mission Bay, and along Tamaki Drive.

- 2.9** Special Events – Round the Bays is not a village community activity and terminates at Vellenoweth Green which is outside the parameters of the St Heliers Town Centre.

Vellenoweth Green and The Parade have been included within the scope of the report notwithstanding they do not form part of the designated St Heliers Town Centre.

- 3.0** Concept Design Principles. In particular, the Board does not agree with the statement made in the AECOM report as follows:

“It is important to note that for successful implementation of a safe transportation system in the village area the speed reduction must be self-explaining and self-enforcing. The low cost posting of speed limit signs alone will not achieve the desired safety outcome for all users. The physical road environment must undergo change to lead drivers to appropriately change their speed when travelling through the village. “ (AECOM ST Heliers Village 30km/h Speed Measures Report)

Conclusion:

The Board does not accept that excessive speed is the primary cause of the vast majority of minor collisions within the St Heliers Town Centre. Having examined the statistics on which the Speed Reduction proposal and used for the justification of a \$1.3 million spend on substantial changes to the built road environment, it is clear that most accidents that are predominantly minor car versus car incidents are due to driver carelessness rather than excessive speed.

SUMMARY:

The support of the Ōrākei Local Board for the general principle of using speed reduction in defined areas where there is a demonstrable need to reduce death and serious injury statistics should not be taken as tacit approval of the infrastructure changes to the St Heliers and Mission Bay Town Centres that have been advised by AECOM to be necessary to change driver behaviour.

30th March 2019