

Statement of Proposal

Proposed Speed Limits Bylaw 2019

Introduction

Auckland Transport (“AT”) is seeking feedback on the draft Auckland Transport Speed Limits Bylaw 2019.

This Statement of Proposal sets out background information, what is being proposed, reasons for the proposal, how submissions on the proposal may be made and how long the consultation period will run for.

Background

Auckland has a serious problem with people needlessly dying and being seriously injured on Auckland’s roads. In 2017 alone, 64 people died and an additional 749 were seriously injured on our roads. That amounts to more than a 70% increase since 2014 or over five times the rate of the rest of New Zealand.

AT is responsible for managing the safe and efficient operation of Auckland’s local road network. The local road network includes public roads and beaches but excludes State Highways for which the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) has responsibility.

AT is committed to improving safety on Auckland’s roads through its Road Safety Programme. AT recognises that speed management is critical to addressing Auckland’s road safety crisis and is undertaking a Safe Speeds Programme as part of its wider Road Safety Programme.

Reviewing and ensuring that speed limits across Auckland are set at levels that are appropriate for road function, safety, design and use is one of the key measures that AT is undertaking to improve safety on Auckland’s roads. Setting safe speed limits will see a reduction in deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

Speed limits must be set by bylaw in accordance with the Land Transport: Setting of Speed Limits Rule 2017 (“the 2017 Rule”). AT has the power under the Land Transport Act 1998 to make bylaws to set speed limits for roads under its control.

The Proposal

AT is proposing to make a new bylaw - the Auckland Transport Speed Limits Bylaw 2019 (“the proposed bylaw”) – to set speed limits for roads under its control.

The proposed bylaw will set new safe speed limits (and confirm some current speed limits), for roads under AT’s control. It is intended to come into effect and bring the new speed limits into force on 20 August 2019.

The proposed bylaw will revoke and replace the Auckland Transport Speed Limits Bylaw 2012 (on the date that it comes into effect).

The proposed bylaw sets out new and confirmed speed limits in a series of schedules as follows:

- Schedule 1: Urban traffic areas
- Schedule 2: Roads within the urban traffic areas (other than in a designated location) where a permanent speed limit other than 50 km/h is set by this bylaw
- Schedule 3: Roads outside the urban traffic areas (other than in a designated location) where a permanent speed limit other than 100 km/h is set by this bylaw
- Schedule 4: Roads within designated locations where a speed limit is set by this bylaw
- Schedule 5: Roads that have a holiday speed limit set by this bylaw
- Schedule 6: Roads that have a variable speed limit set by this bylaw
- Schedule 7: Current speed limits set again by this bylaw
- Schedule 8: Existing speed limits set under a previous bylaw that continue in force

These schedules will form the basis of AT's Register of Speed Limits as required by the 2017 Rule.

A full copy of the proposed bylaw is attached and forms part of this Statement of Proposal.

Reasons for the Proposal

Auckland roads are not engineered to be self-explaining to encourage safe speed behaviour by drivers. The current speed limits on most Auckland local roads are not suitable for the existing conditions. Many of the rural roads are twisting and hilly with narrow unforgiving lanes that pose challenges to even the most experienced drivers. The consequences of small driver errors on these roads can be fatal. This is considered a significant contributor to death and serious injuries (DSI), which strongly suggests that the current road environment and design of Auckland roads are not designed in such a way that the operating speed is the safe speed.

To tackle the problems of increasing deaths and serious injuries on Auckland's roads, AT has developed a Safe Speeds Programme. This Programme is part of a wider Road Safety Programme and aims to improve the safety of Auckland's roads by taking a more modern approach to speed management and setting safe speed limits on Auckland roads. Speed management has been identified as a cost-effective approach for reducing the number of people who die or are seriously injured on our roads.

Speed determines both the likelihood of a crash occurring and the severity of the outcome. Regardless of what causes a crash, whether people walk away or are carried away will depend on the speed their vehicles are travelling. Our crash stats show 80% of all death and serious injury occurs on 50km/h local urban roads and 45% of all local urban death and serious injury involve vulnerable road users (people walking, people on bikes, people on motorcycles, children, the elderly and the differently abled – people not in cars).

It is not just about keeping the driver and passengers of a car safe. While modern cars have improved safety features, if we crash into vulnerable road users at speeds higher than 30km/h, the risk of them dying or being seriously injured increases substantially.

AT has undertaken a review of existing speed limits across Auckland, focusing on the high risk roads across the Auckland transport system road network. As required by the 2017 Rule, speed limits have been reviewed with regard to:

- information and guidance from the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), including NZTA's Speed Management Guide (November 2016);
- the function and use of the road;
- crash risk for all road users;
- the characteristics of the road and roadsides;
- adjacent land use;
- number of intersections and property access ways;
- traffic volume;
- any planned modification to the road;

In summary, the findings of the review identified that many posted speed limits are not currently set at a safe speed. AT is proposing to set new speed limits for a significant number of roads in response to these findings.

It is proposed to introduce speed management on 10.7% of the local road network, which includes high risk roads and nearby roads for a holistic approach. This is to align with the one network approach and allows for the implementation of a consistent treatment across the road network based on the following type of areas, rural roads, urban roads, town centre, City Centre and residential roads. This is to design treatments specifically to reduce crash types that occur in each of the road types.

According to the 2017 Rule, a road controlling authority (such as AT) may only set speed limits (other than temporary or emergency speed limits) and designate an urban traffic area by making a bylaw. The proposed bylaw is needed to introduce the new speed limits that AT considers appropriate following its review of existing speed limits.

The proposed bylaw not only sets new (changed) speed limits for many roads in response to the review, it also confirms many existing speed limits for a significant number of roads. Schedule 7 of the bylaw confirms speed limits that were set by legacy district councils. Schedule 8 saves existing speed limits that were set under a previous bylaw. AT is taking the opportunity to consolidate speed limits for all roads under its control into a single bylaw.

Options considered

Option 1: No change – keep the existing speed limits for all roads across the network

Keeping the speed limits the same as they currently are for all roads across the network is considered highly undesirable as it does not respond to the findings of the review and the increase in deaths and serious injuries on Auckland's roads.

Option 2: Set new speed limits across the network to respond to the findings of the review

Setting new speed limits across the network as outlined below.

City Centre and Town Centres

Introduce 30km/h speed limits in Auckland's City Centre and the town centres, as listed in schedule 2 of the proposed bylaw.

The reasons for treating the City Centre and town centres include:

- Making a safer environment where there are high numbers of vulnerable road users,

- Reduce speed limits to survivable levels recognising that many users share the same space,
- Existing operating (actual) speeds are normally lower than posted speeds during peak periods due to the high volume of foot traffic,
- Creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness and well-being.

Urban Roads

Designate new urban traffic areas within which roads will have a speed limit of 50km/h unless specifically set at a different limit as listed in schedule 1 of the proposed bylaw. The new urban traffic areas take into account recent changes in the area, such as new developments.

Reduction of 70km/h speed limits to a safe speed limit for the road environment.

Residential Zones

Introduce a 30km/h speed limit for the roads as listed in schedule 2 of the proposed bylaw. The residential zones will:

- Reduce speed limits to survivable levels recognising that many road users share the same space,
- Provide a more people focused street where families feel safer,
- Residential roads are becoming increasingly busy as traffic levels increase, and more people choose to walk and cycle,
- Research has shown that reducing speed in residential areas has many health and well-being benefits,
- Area-wide changes rather than individual streets as they are part of a larger road network.

Rural Roads

Introduce safe speed limits on rural roads, as listed in schedules 3 and 6 of the proposed bylaw. Rural roads will:

- Focus on high crash risk routes,
- Need to introduce safe and appropriate speeds across areas rather than individual roads,
- Making key routes safer with no speed limits greater than 80km/h without a centre median separation

This option includes confirming some existing speed limits as listed in schedules 7 and 8 of the proposed bylaw.

AT now wants your feedback

Before making any final decisions on the proposed bylaw and speed limit changes, AT wants your input.

You can give us feedback from **28 February 2019 until 31 March 2019**.

How to give feedback

There are a number of ways you can give feedback:

- Online at www.at.govt.nz/speed and www.at.govt.nz/haveyoursay
- By way of online submission forms available from 28 February 2019
In person. Those who wish to be heard by a Hearing Panel will be given the opportunity to do so. Please contact AT on phone (09) 355 3553 if you would like to be heard in person. You will be informed of the time and venue for the hearing of submissions.

For any queries please contact ATSpeedProgramme@at.govt.nz.