

Subject: Traffic Calming Requests - Mercury Bay Area

From: "Ed Varley" <Ed.Varley@tcdc.govt.nz>

Sent: 25/06/2021 9:13:18 AM

To: "Brent Page" <brentpage@xtra.co.nz>; "Kuaotunu Residents And Ratepayers Assn" <kuaotunuresidentsandratepayers@kuaotunu.nz>; "Graeme and Cyndy" <gandclomas@xtra.co.nz>; "Andrew Bain" <abainnz@gmail.com>; "steve@malarin.com" <steve@malarin.com>;

CC: "Allan Tiplady" <allan.tiplady@tcdc.govt.nz>; "Heather Bruce" <heather.bruce@tcdc.govt.nz>; "George Mathew" <George.Mathew@tcdc.govt.nz>; "James McHardy" <james.mchardy@tcdc.govt.nz>;

Good morning all,

My apologies for the lack of response on the requests for traffic calming within the communities that you represent. This is due the ongoing changes in the processes involved in setting speed limits and designing traffic calming that are currently being imposed nationally.

As you are aware from our discussions on site, New Zealand is currently reviewing its procedures for setting speed limits as part of the "Safer Speeds" component of the national road safety strategy. National government is consulting on a proposed new rule enabling an improved approach to speed management planning on New Zealand roads, called the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2021, with a view to the introduction of legislation in November 2021.

In the past individual local authorities were able to set their own speed limits by use of local bylaws. This will change with the introduction of the new legislation late this year, with speed limits created by input into a national register. I have reviewed the legislation on behalf of Council and do not believe that there are any issues with it.

More details on this can be found at <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/consultations/land-transport-rule-setting-of-speed-limits-2021-consultation/>

Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency) are the authority charged with incorporating the legislation into current processes. They have chosen to incorporate the implementation of the legislation into the national "Road to Zero" campaign for road safety and to introduce procedures for the submission of speed limit changes and road safety initiatives such as the ones that we discussed. At this time the actual processes for the changes of speed limits under the new legislation have not been published by Waka Kotahi, neither have the expected measures for the justification of speed limit changes, levels of public consultation required, nor definitive design guidance on acceptable speed reduction or traffic calming features.

While I am confident that the measures we discussed are viable, they may not be acceptable to the reviewers within Waka Kotahi and may not be approved. There now also appears to be an additional hurdle in that any changes need to be justified with a road safety business case for each site to prove the anticipated benefits (again, we do not know the anticipated form of this business case).

It has been announced that any changes to speed limits or traffic calming measures proposed by Council now have to form part of a 10 year forward plan that has to be prepared in advance by Council, agreed on a regional basis and then submitted to Waka Kotahi for review before approval. By incorporating the processes within this programme Waka Kotahi can make funding available to enable this to take place, and have already agreed potential expenditure in the region of \$650k over a three year period for road safety in the District. In the past the funding for road safety schemes was obtained from routine road marking and signing budgets, so a dedicated budget source is a positive move forward.

Unfortunately Waka Kotahi announced this after the preparation of the Councils Long-Term Plan, and Council have not made provision for the contributions (roughly 50/50) from Council to enable us to use this fund (Council have to find \$325k to match \$325k from Waka Kotahi).

The earliest that I am able to confirm any additional funding from Council to try to match the Waka Kotahi contribution would be in the October 2021 quarterly budget reconciliation.

There is another issue with this funding, as it has been allocated by Waka Kotahi based upon studies of the district road network. This has been done by Waka Kotahi centrally by the use of an algorithm to study the nature and alignments of the districts road network, calculating the safe speeds for each particular section of road, and apportioning funds to be spent on those roads accordingly. This has resulted in proposals such as setting a speed limit of 80kph on the 309 Road and Tapu-Coroglen, with funding levels around \$100k for each site (generated by the nature of the road). While I would agree that a speed limit on these roads of 80kph would be sensible (60kph being the anticipated speed of vehicles), I cannot justify the expenditure of that level of funding on those sites, but at present that is the requirement from Waka Kotahi.

In order to obtain Waka Kotahi approval to proceed with projects and gain funding for our proposals from this source, the Council appears to have to provide evidence to move the funding from the Waka Kotahi projects (that are justified by casualty reduction according to Waka Kotahi measures) to locally developed ones requested by the community, and for this to form part of the district wide 10-year plan. There does not appear to be any procedure for individual sites identified over the course of a year to be addressed, or for any form of immediate response from Council to customers' requests.

At this time Waka Kotahi have provided no guidance on how to manage the transition from the current processes that become redundant on the 1st July, or on the adoption of the new processes enabled by the legislation in November when they come into force.

At this time regret that I am unable to confirm potential designs as national guidance on what may be acceptable may change, and unable to confirm if budgets are available, or when work may take place.

Ed Varley

Roading Manager

Thames-Coromandel District Council

e: ed.varley@tcdc.govt.nz

w: www.tcdc.govt.nz



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