

STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Councillors

FROM: Steve Elkington, Roding Asset Engineer

DATE: 18 February 2009

REFERENCE: B953

SUBJECT: **Proposed Change to Tasman District Council's Consolidated Bylaw Chapter 4 - Speed Limits Bylaw 2004**

UPPER MOUTERE SPEED LIMIT

1 PURPOSE

To request that Council adopt the proposal to lower the speed limit through Upper Moutere Village from 70kph to 50kph.

2 BACKGROUND

The speed limit through the village of Upper Moutere is currently 70kph. The proposal is to reduce the speed limit through the village to 50kph and install appropriate traffic calming devices to coerce drivers to comply with the lower speed limit.

A report was presented to Council's Engineering Services Committee in November 2008 outlining the proposed speed limit change along with recommended traffic calming treatment and requesting the proposed speed limit of 50kph be circulated for public consultation.

The proposed speed limit change for Upper Moutere was advertised in mid-December 2008 and closed on Monday 9 February 2009. Additional time was given for submissions to allow for the Christmas break.

Letters outlining the proposed change and inviting submissions were sent to the NZ Police, the Automobile Association, NZ Road Transport Forum Region 4 and the NZ Transport Agency.

3 DISCUSSION

3.1 Why Review the Speed Limit?

The speed limit through Upper Moutere has previously been reviewed with the 70kph recommended as appropriate and supported by a good level of driver compliance. However, it was decided to reconsider the speed limit after the Upper Moutere School Board of Trustees wrote to the Council requesting it reconsider a 50kph speed limit due to a number of recent near misses involving pedestrians.

3.2 Facts

The Moutere Highway is an arterial road and therefore important in its function as a transport route carrying approximately 2000 vehicles per day.

It is important that high trafficked through routes have appropriate speed limits set to achieve good compliance. However, it is recognised in the case of Upper Moutere village that there is a 200-metre section of road in the vicinity of the school frontage, shops, fuel station and roadside parking that whilst meeting the requirements for a 50kph speed limit, does not meet the minimum required length of 500-metres under the Rule.

3.3 Alternatives to Reducing the Speed Limit

The options for altering the streetscape to reduce risk such as changing or limiting roadside parking and widening the road enabling the footpaths to be constructed further from the live traffic lane, is very limited due to the lack of legal road width in places and considerable cost. However the issue of crossing a road with a 70kph speed limit would still exist.

A review of the roadway in front of the school has been undertaken for a school zone variable speed limit. Unfortunately there is insufficient roadside activity particularly on the Moutere Highway to meet the warrant. On the side road parking occurs close to the intersection and speeds are considerably limited. Furthermore a 40kph speed limit would only operate for a maximum period of 30 minutes before and after school, the rest of the time the speed limit would be 70kph.

3.4 Traffic Calming Measures

Traffic calming measures would be installed once the recommendation to lower the speed limit is approved.

This enhancement will reinforce the driver's visual cue of a change in the speed environment. This work will include planting areas around both threshold signs, marking of a centre flush median at the southern approach to the village as the carriageway width at the northern approach is insufficient, and marking an area of pavement in red to highlight the proposed "50 kph" speed limit markings similar to Lower Queen Street in Richmond.

3.5 Submissions

Ten submissions were received with eight, one including a petition supporting the change, with two against. A copy of the submissions is attached. A copy of the petition is available for perusal should Councillors wish to sight it.

3.5.1 Supporting lowering the speed limit to 50kph

- NZ Police – Supported the proposal and felt the proposed traffic calming measures should be implemented as soon as possible prior to the speed limit change as well as consideration be given to installing temporarily "Change Road Conditions" signage.
- Mark Seek - Upper Moutere Youth Worker.
- Hops & Glory Ltd - The Moutere Inn.
- Robbie Newlands – Moutere Motors.
- Owen Bartlett & Katie Gold – Owners of gallery in Upper Moutere.
- Colin Wratt – Resident of Old House Rd.

- Upper Moutere School – Board of Trustees.
- Petition of 168 signatures collected from members of the school community by the Board of Trustees.

3.5.2 Against lowering the speed limit to 50kph

- NZ Transport Agency – NZTA did not support the change as the calculated speed limit warrant rating of 8.7 only corresponded to a speed limit of 70kph. They also noted that the 85th percentile speed recorded from a recent speed survey was 73km/h. NZTA also recommended the southern speed limit threshold be extended towards the South to reduce the number of crashes occurring due to speed at the bend situated at the Sunrise Valley Road intersection. They also suggested the use of Active School Warning Signs.
- NZ Transport Association Region 4 – Did not support the lower speed limit but instead suggested Council install a school zone variable speed limit.

4 RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council adopt the following proposal to its Consolidated Bylaw Chapter 4 – Speed Limit Bylaw 2004, to lower the speed limit through Upper Moutere Village from 70kph to 50kph and for this change to come into force on Wednesday 1 April 2009.

Steve Elkington
Roading Asset Engineer