

STAFF REPORT

TO: Chairman and Members, Engineering Services Committee

FROM: Steve Elkington Road Asset Engineer

REFERENCE: T601

DATE: 30 May 2006

SUBJECT: **TRANSIT NEW ZEALAND SPEED LIMIT PROPOSAL - SH60
BETWEEN MOTUEKA & RIWAKA**

1. PURPOSE

To recommend that Council supports Transit New Zealand's proposal to lower the current 100 kph Speed Limit on State Highway 60 between Motueka and Riwaka to 80 kph.

2. BACKGROUND

Last year Transit New Zealand proposed to lower the speed limit on State Highway 60 between Motueka and Riwaka, a length of approximately 3.07km, thereby making this section of highway safer.

The review was also requested by the Police due to the nature of the road having scattered residential and commercial developments along the route which generate a great deal of road user activity. The narrowness of the Motueka River Bridge is also a concern.

There have been 31 reported crashes along this 3.07km section of SH60 within the past five years.

Transit's roading consultant OPUS International, undertook a Speed Limit Warrant which met the requirements for an 80kph Speed Limit.

Last year Ward Councillors were canvassed for their views and some initially were reluctant to support the proposal based on concerns for increase traffic volumes and possibly speed on Council's local roads, mainly Umukuri and Swamp Roads. Therefore, Council was reluctant to support the changes and requested a speed survey be undertaken to establish the existing operating speed of the road section under review. Based on two sites surveyed along the route, the 85th percentile speed was close to 80 kph, thereby suggesting that drivers' would most likely respect the lower speed limit and the impact on Council's local roads will be minimal.

3. COMMENT

One of the issues with lowering the speed limit on SH60 between Motueka and Riwaka is to encourage more traffic to use Swamp and Umukuri Roads. There is no certainty this will happen as those who use this route now, will most likely continue to bypass Riwaka. Those who don't use this alternative route are either from out of town or the route doesn't suit or appeal. It must be remembered that Swamp Road is not the most comfortable road to travel on as it has numerous undulations as well as deep side drains and a narrow roadway.

Also the intersection of Umukuri Road and SH60 is only approximately 480 metres south of Riwaka where the existing 50 kph Speed Limit begins and therefore, the lowering of the speed limit to 80 kph between Motueka and this intersection will most likely have little effect as the only other route is via School Road and Lodder Lane which both have speed limits of 50 kph and 70 kph respectively.

Due to Transit New Zealand's proposal to lower the speed limit on State Highway 60 to 80 kph, Council proposes to also lower the speed limit of both Umukuri and Swamp Roads from 100 kph to 80 kph.

Council will continue to monitor the speed on both Lodder Lane and Swamp Road routes and, where speed becomes an issue, then refer the details to the New Zealand Police for enforcement.

4. RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Engineering Services Committee support Transit New Zealand's proposal to lower the speed limit of SH60 between Motueka and Riwaka, to 80 kph.

Steve Elkington
Road Asset Engineer