

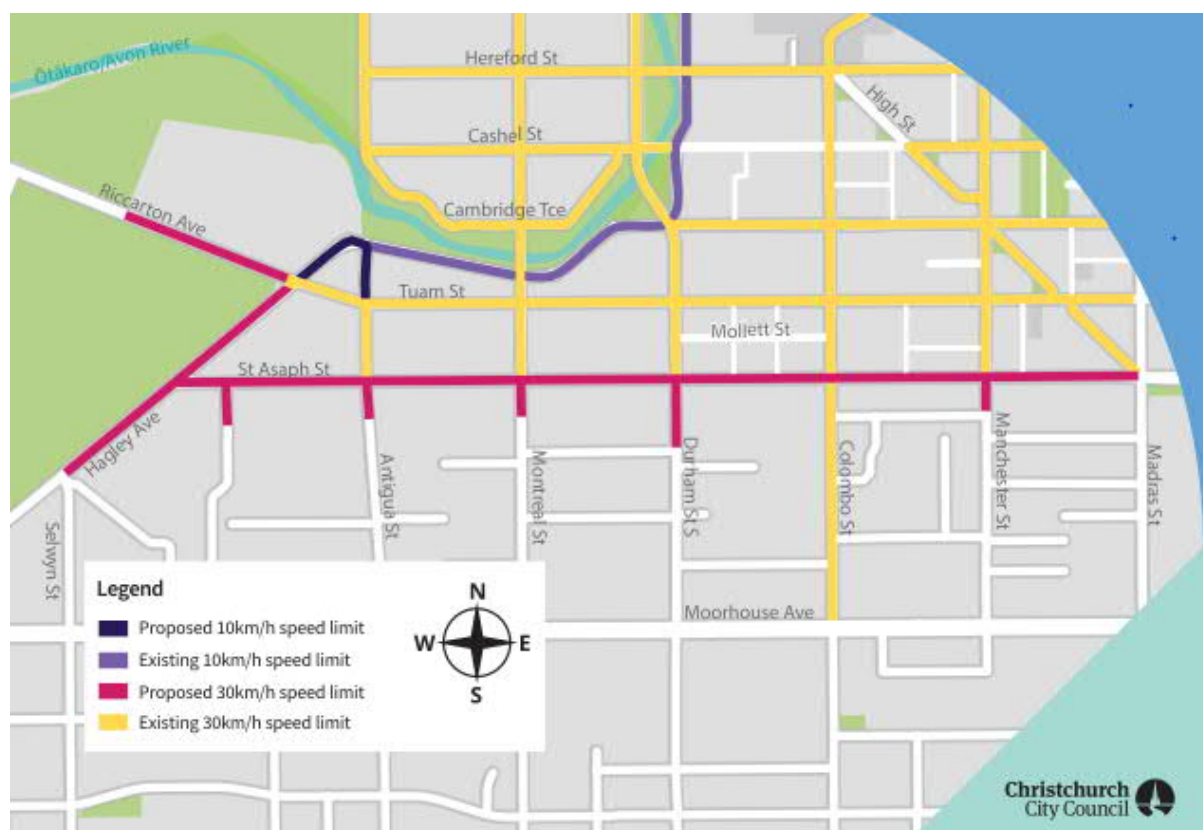
Southern central city speed review consultation report

A summary of responses

Seven hundred and thirty seven responses were received during consultation on the southern central city speed review which opened on 14 August and closed on 4 September 2018.

The Council asked for feedback on three different elements of the linked proposals:

1. Proposed reduction of the current 50km/h speed limit, to 30 km/h on St Asaph Street (from Madras Street to Hagley Avenue), Hagley Avenue from Selwyn Street to Riccarton Avenue, and Riccarton Avenue in front of Christchurch Hospital (and including the planned emergency vehicles entrance to the new acute services building).
Responses: support 261 (35%), do not support 473 (64%) and 3 not indicated (0.4%)
2. Associated new speed threshold gateways to slow traffic approaching these routes and areas.
Responses: support 251 (34%), do not support 474 (64%) and not indicated 12 (2%)
3. Proposed 10 km/h (reduced from the current 30km/h) on small sections of Oxford Terrace and Antigua Street (north of Tuam Street) around the new Outpatients Building.
Responses: support 296 (40%), do not support 421 (57%) and not indicated 20 (3%)



Background

Under the national Land Transport Rule – Setting Speed Limits 2017, the Council must consult on any proposed speed limit change.

Staff had initially sought feedback in June 2016 on lowering the speed limit on St Asaph Street and Hagley Avenue from 50 km/h to 30 km/h. Of the submissions received at that time, 77 per cent of the 155 submitters opposed reducing the speed limit and the Council retained the status quo. However, with the prospect of a new school, Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery School, and the Metro Sports Facility being built on St Asaph Street, the Council last year asked for this decision to be reviewed.

In addition, a 2017 post-construction safety audit for the St Asaph Street streetscape changes recommended a number of post-construction design and operational changes, including lowering the speed limit from 50 km/h to 30 km/h. The Council resolved in November 2017 that consultation on a lower speed limit should be undertaken. This was confirmed in February 2018.

More recently, the Council requested a comprehensive review of the safety and functionality of the St Asaph Street corridor. A resulting independent joint report by Beca and Stantec (two transport and engineering consultancies), titled the St Asaph Street Safety and Functionality Review, has also recommended that the posted speed limit be reduced to 30 km/h as a priority. Key reasons for this include:

- The proposed lower speed limit would improve safety for all users – both existing and those expected with an increased range of land uses and activities, particularly restaurants and bars, along and north and south of the corridor;
- A pedestrian has a 10% likelihood of death or serious injury if struck by a vehicle traveling at 30km/h. This increases to an 80% likelihood of death or serious injury if struck by a vehicle travelling at 50km/h. There are pedestrian desire lines crossing the street including to and from lane-ways that will likely increase with opening of new developments, including the Discovery School (an expected roll of circa 670 students);
- Drivers are feeling pressured entering access ways and using on-street car parks – a lower posted speed regime would reduce this pressure, increasing the safety of footpath users and cyclists;
- 30km/h encourages a smaller range in corridor vehicle speeds, creating consistency of user expectations - resulting in lower crash rates;
- Drivers have been concerned with the safety effects of narrow traffic lanes and offsets to on-street parking – where a reduced speed regime would improve that perceived safety;
- The road is largely designed to operate at a speed regime of circa 30 km/h.

Feedback from current (August/September 2018) consultation

Proposed 30 km/h speed limit

737 individuals and organisations submitted on this matter

Of the 261 submitters who supported the 30 km/h speed limit (35% of respondents), 58 said the slow speed zone km/h was working well in the central city, with many believing that it was safer and more people-friendly.

Thirty submitters called for the 30 km/h zone to be further extended to variously cover more streets, with suggestions including:

- Hagley Avenue, to Moorhouse Avenue;
- Stewart Street, to Moorhouse Avenue;
- Waller Terrace, to Moorhouse Avenue,

- Madras Street (southwards to Moorhouse Avenue, including the Ara Institute frontage to Madras Street);
- All central city streets inside the Four Avenues.

Twenty-four respondents said the lower speed limit needed to be more actively enforced.

The New Zealand Property Council submitted that to improve legibility and driver acceptance, the 30 km/h slow speed zone should instead be bounded by Montreal Street, Madras Street, Kilmore Street and St Asaph Street, but with the bordering one way streets operating at 50 km/h.

Twenty-one of the submitters who supported the lower speed limit referred to the opening next year of Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery School, located on the north of St Asaph Street and to the west of Colombo Street. They believe this will positively contribute to the safety of students aged from five to 18.

Ten submitters noted that southern central city traffic signals were already set at about a 30 km/h progression speed, and eight submitted that this speed was appropriate for the design of St Asaph Street.

Of the 473 submitters (64% of respondents) who opposed the introduction of the 30 km/h speed limit, 117 said the slower speed regime has already/or would deter people coming into the central city.

Thirty-nine respondents said the speed for St Asaph Street, as a major east-west traffic route, and other one way city streets (such as the one way traffic pairs) should remain at 50 km/h. Twenty-two submitters commented that if 40 km/h was considered safe for school zones elsewhere, it should also be appropriate for St Asaph Street.

Other issues highlighted by submitters who did not support the slower speed limit were:

- 30 km/h is considered too slow;
- St Asaph Street should instead have a variable speed limit, which would allow vehicles to travel faster when there is little other traffic on the road;
- 30 km/h would cause a combination of congestion and accessibility/problems, both on St Asaph Street and other local roads;
- That the existing 30 km/h limit is often ignored;
- That the speed limit change is largely unnecessary as it is self-regulating;
- Longer travel times would impact on urgent journeys to Christchurch Hospital.

As a result of the concerns raised about journey times, the Council's transport project team met with both St John and Fire and Emergency services representatives in late October 2018, to discuss the expected operational implications to emergency services of the proposed slower speed limits. The emergency services representatives are satisfied that any operational implications to their services are likely to be limited and would be offset by the anticipated improvements in road safety on these streets as a result of the lower speed limits. In addition, the Police have not raised any concerns about the operational implications of the proposed slower speed limits, which are intended to be broadly self-explanatory and therefore self-enforcing.

Proposed gateways (to extended 30km/h low speed zone)

Road treatments to slow vehicles approaching the proposed new 30 km/h street sections (and enable placement of the new 30km/h regulatory speed limit signs) were opposed by 474 submitters, (64% of respondents).

Several submitters identified that they did not want to lose on-street car parks at the proposed gateway threshold points at Montreal Street (four parking spaces proposed to be removed) and Manchester Street (one parking space proposed to be removed). Two submitters wanted the Council to ensure the gateway design did not 'squeeze' cyclists at these entry points.

The gateway design proposed for Antigua Street was not supported by cycling advocacy group Spokes, who submitted that the proposed central median would force 1000 plus cyclists a day travelling through this shared zone closer to cars. They submitted that this could be made acceptable by removing four car parking spaces. Spokes further submitted that the central city would benefit from extending the proposed 30km/h slow speed zone out to the Four Avenues.

Proposed 10 km/h for Oxford Terrace and Antigua Street (adjacent to the new Outpatients Building, Hospital Corner)

The proposed 10 km/h slow speed limit for short sections of Oxford Terrace and Antigua Street, both adjacent to the new Hospital Outpatients Building, was supported by 296 submitters (40% of respondents).

Many of those supporting the proposal commented that this area needed to provide a safe area for injured or disabled patients accessing outpatient and Hospital services. Some believed it would also tie in with the Te Papa Ōtākaro / Avon River Precinct on Oxford Terrace, which is already 10 km/h.

However, Spokes and some other submitters commented that 10 km/h was too slow for cyclists. The proposed speed was also considered too slow and unreasonable by many of the 421 submitters (57% of respondents) who opposed the 10 km/h speed limit.

The Automobile Association (AA) spokesperson submitted that the AA remained concerned about the detail of design changes on Oxford Terrace, adjacent to the Outpatients Building.

Other comments by submitters included:

- It may be preferable to entirely close this section of Oxford Terrace to motorised vehicles;
- Pedestrians needed to use designated crossings;
- Would the 10 km/h speed limit be enforced for cyclists and other vehicles?