

Submission on the Palmerston North Speed Limits Bylaw 2007 and the Traffic and Parking Amendment Bylaw 2007

Name: Living Streets Aotearoa (Palmerston North)
Address: c/- 37 Oxford Street, Palmerston North

Questions:

1. *Do you support the proposed Speed Limits Bylaw 2007?*

Yes but only with a number of changes (see below)

2. *Do you support the proposed speed limits alterations?*

Yes but only with a number of changes (see below)

3. *Do you support the proposed Traffic and Parking Amendment Bylaw 2007?*

Yes.

Reasons for agreement or disagreement

1. Living Streets applauds the proposal to set speeds limits to better match the nature of the land use adjacent to different roads.
2. We especially support the continuation/imposition of lower speed limits proposed in the 5 parks and recreational areas and the Kelvin Grove cemetery.
3. We wish to comment on 3 aspects of the proposed Speed Limits Bylaw and make suggestions for improvement.
4. Firstly, we address the omission of lower speed limits (less than 50km/h) along roads that are adjacent to schools and other educational facilities.
5. Secondly, we believe it would be useful to formalise slower speeds in the CBD area.
6. Thirdly, we advocate lower speed limits along certain peripheral roads to enhance safety along, and enjoyment of, them.

School Speed Limits

7. The areas around schools are especially hazardous because of the combination of through traffic, traffic stopping at the schools, young people

whose road safety sense hasn't yet developed and other people, some of whom sometimes seem to have left their road safety sense at home.

8. They are also especially hazardous because of the timing of the traffic, with many people delivering their children to school on the way to work or other appointments and consequently being in a hurry, leading to some inconsiderate and occasionally reckless driving behaviour.
9. The situation is complicated by the fact that the risk posed by the hazard differs through the day and over the year coinciding with periods when children are entering or leaving the facilities.
10. However, this complexity could be overcome by imposing variable speed limits – ones which are operative at just times when the risk is greatest.
11. Numerous other cities (Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Napier, Christchurch and others) are creating slow speed zones near schools and Living Streets Palmerston North believes we should be doing so too.
12. This would contribute to the community outcome of 'people feel safe' without compromising the outcome of it being 'easy to move around'.
13. Just about every parent or caregiver recognises the danger children are exposed to in getting to or from school and that the most dangerous part of the trip is often the last 100 metres.
14. Living Streets Palmerston North has very briefly run a petition to ascertain the degree of support among parents of school-age children and others for lower speed limits near schools and early childhood education facilities; the petition will be supplied separately.
15. The support for the petition was very strong. There is a strong desire to make our roads safer and many residents would feel that they were safer if vehicle speeds were slower.
16. Living Streets Palmerston North would like to see lower speed limits outside all schools and early childhood education facilities and suggests that the proposed speed limits bylaw be amended to achieve this.
17. The majority of signatories to the petition believed that 30 km/h would be the most appropriate speed limit and Living Streets Palmerston North supports this.
18. Living Streets Palmerston North does recognise that there would be practical issues to address in imposing either permanent or variable speed limits near schools and early childhood education facilities and will be happy to discuss these at the hearing.

CBD Speed Limit

19. Although actual speeds are typically moderate in most of the CBD, this is not always the case.
20. Formalising speed limits at 30 km/h would contribute to the CBD being made a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment and be consistent with the Council's intention that the area should be a destination rather than used as a through route.
21. It would also provide another tool to use to deter people using parts of the CBD as a racing circuit.
22. The after dark use of the Square and other parts of the CBD as a racing circuit, particularly by vehicles modified to create excessive noise, is an important factor in creating a sense of danger in the place and may contribute to the reluctance of many of the city's more considerate residents to be in the area at that time.
23. Living Streets Palmerston North suggests that the draft bylaw be amended to include speed limits lower than 50 km/h throughout the CBD.

Peripheral Roads Speed Limits

24. Living Streets Palmerston North believes that the proposed speed limits of 80 km/h along three roads in the area are unnecessary, potentially confusing and likely to lead to non-compliance.
25. It is suggested that it would be better to replace the proposed 80 km/h speed limits on these roads with 70 km/h limits.
26. Furthermore, we believe that the increased use of both Turitea and Kahuterawa Roads by owners of residences and recreational users (both walkers and cyclists) means that safety on, and enjoyment of, these roads would be enhanced by having lower speed limits on them.
27. This is likely to be increasingly the case over the coming 5 years (the life of the bylaw) as residential development along, and recreational use of, these two roads increases.
28. Therefore, we suggest that both roads have speed limits of 70 km/h.
29. Finally, we point out that there is potential for considerable incongruity between speed limits on roads for which the City Council is the road controlling authority and those which are state highways; this is especially the case for SH57.
30. We recommend that PNCC uses all opportunities to convince the road controlling authority for state highways to decrease the speed limit on

SH57 from 100 km/h to 70 km/h from its junction with the Pahiatua Track Road to the junction with Tennent Drive.

I do wish to speak to this submission at the 7.30pm meeting of the Planning and Environmental Well-being Committee on Monday 30th April 2007 but request that I be able to do this by teleconference (speaker phone) as I will be in Wellington at that time. This has been done successfully before. Please let me know whether or not this will be possible.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chris Teo-Sherrell
(Local contact for Living Streets Aotearoa (Palmerston North))