

## Proposed Speed limit Changes Submission

From

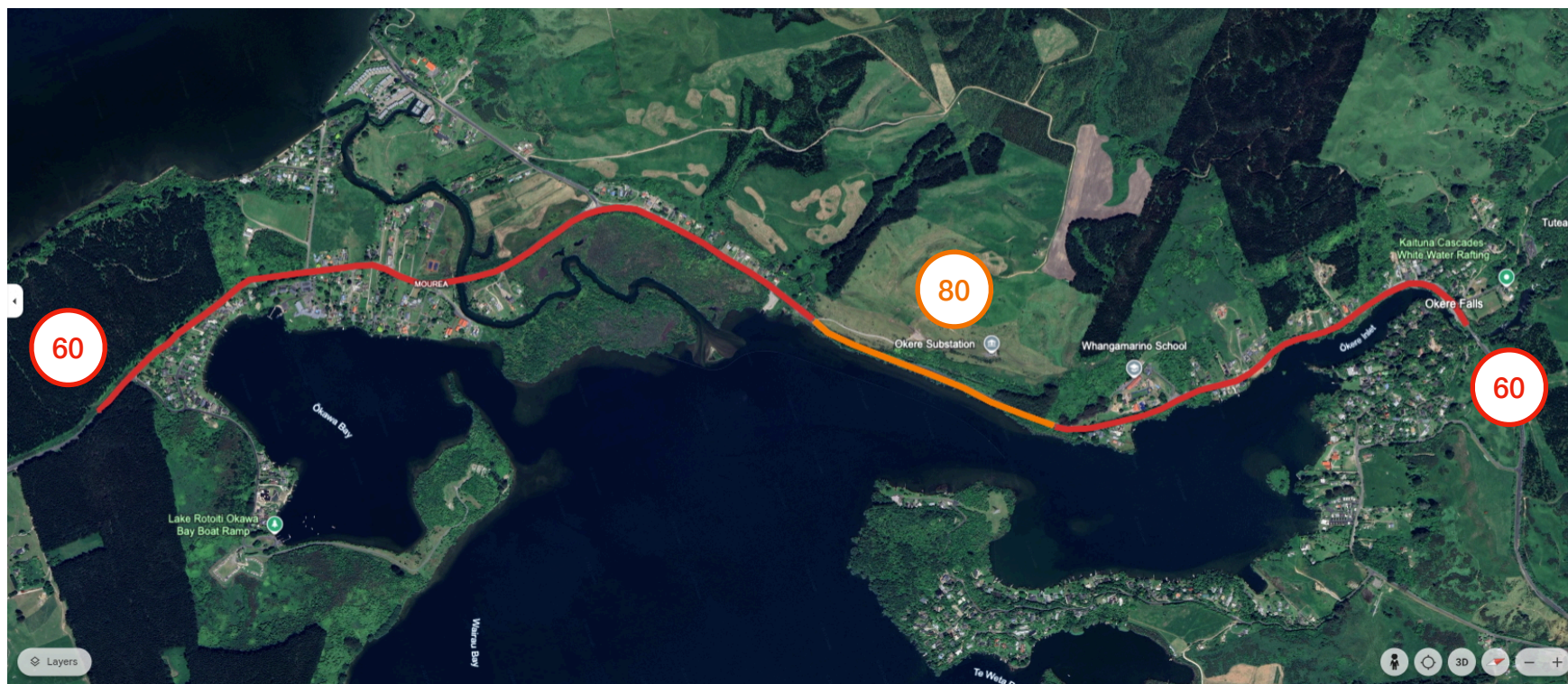
Lake Rotoiti Community Association

We Submit that the

850m 80kph Section SH33 from Okere Falls to South of Waipuna Bay

Be Reduced to 60kph to match the adjoining Sections

& Protect the surrounding Communities & their Visitors



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## Submission Introduction

The Lake Rotoiti Community Association Incorporated, (LRCA), welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency's review of SH33's speed limits. Our association is a long standing charitable organisation which takes a leading role in representing a large community of interest in the Lake Rotoiti area. We acknowledge the ongoing support of local and national bodies in support of the interests and welfare of our community and the public.

### **We Submit that the 850m 80kph Section SH33 from Okere Falls to South of Waipuna Bay Be Reduced to 60kph to match the Adjoining Sections and Protect the Affected Communities**

As it is, at **850** metres this section is only 50 metres above the "**800**" metre minimum length the new **Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024** specifies in its guideline for establishing a speed limit of 80kph and is definitely way under the limit of "**2,000**" metres for a 100kph speed limit.

A speed limit configuration of 60kph for the 5km section, (a 5 minute drive), of Sh33 between Okawa Bay and Okere Falls is entirely appropriate for the size of the local and visitor community and their necessary living and recreational use of this section of road.

Retaining the speed to 80kph for an 850m section, (a 38 second drive), saving an unlikely to be achieved maximum of 13 seconds, makes no sense when driver sentiment and the risks to the community are taken into account.

Our community has made it quite clear that the current changing speed limits are confusing and inconsistent, (which is contrary to the new rule's intention), and that the safety of our community and visitors is put to significant risk both by the higher speed limit for this section, but most importantly by the risk of motorists inadvertently continuing at speed beyond the 60kph reduce speed signs.

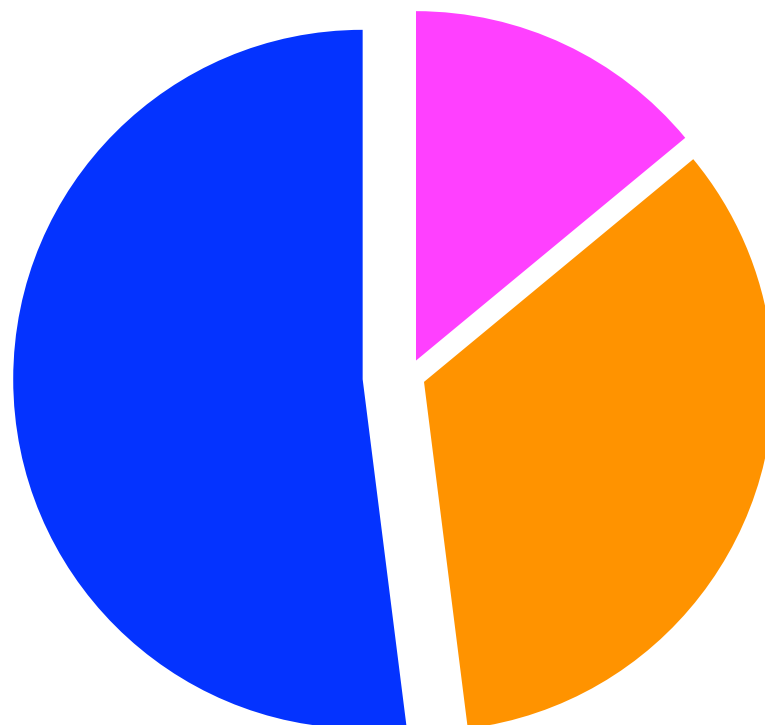
We note that as NZ / Aotearoa and the lakes become more populated and tourism grows, our roads will continue become busier and the need to configure speed limits sensibly will become increasingly important.

## Rotoiti Community Support for CONSISTENCY & SAFETY - Reduction to 60kph - Poll Results

The Community Association surveyed our members late February asking them what their preference was for the speed for the current 850m section of SH33 which is 80kph between Okere Falls to South Waipuna Bay.

The response was very clear with

- **52%** in favour of a reduction from the current 80kph to 60kph
- **34%** in favour of retaining the current speed of 80kph
- **14%** in favour of an increase to 100kph



**Rotoiti Community Support for CONSISTENCY & SAFETY - Reduction to 60kph -  
Reason for Support - typical comments:**

**Consistency Desired**

- Too short to be any other speed
- It's too short a section.
- Only sensible conclusion.
- If the 80km section can't be made longer, then it makes sense to just have a single speed limit.
- It has always confused us as to why this section is at a different speed to the rest of the road from Hamurana Road to Okere Falls.
- Consistency is the key.
- Consistency
- Too short a distance between limits
- To have consistency on a small stretch of highway
- It's a know brainer, why not with 60kph on both sides. Its only 850m.
- It is too short a section to effectively raise and then lower your speed.
- As the sections around are only 60, this area should be reduced to 60

## **Rotoiti Community Support for CONSISTENCY & SAFETY - Reduction to 60kph -**

### **Reason for Support - typical comments:**

### **Confusion Caused by Short Sections at different Speeds**

- The locations of the speed limit changes make no sense and it is easy to miss the signs.
- It is confusing to have so many speed zones in such a short distance.
- Having this short section at 80 is unnecessarily confusing.
- Multiple changes of speed are confusing.
- The current signage is also very easy to miss even when you know a speed limit change is approaching
- To have consistency on a small stretch of highway and not lead to confusion for drivers.
- It's odd and kind of silly to have that very small section of road at a higher speed- many vehicles don't even get up to the speed before they have to slow down again
- It's confusing and inappropriate
- It is confusing to have the small section at a different speed
- Too much inconsistency, causing confusion and unnecessary fines
- Increasing to 80kph for only 850m is not necessary and as mentioned adds to confusion
- High "touristy" traffic on confusing short stretch
- Short distance being changed, and the inevitable confusion incurs.
- Different speed limits for short distances generally are just fund-raising opportunities for the camera vans!

## **Rotoiti Community Support for CONSISTENCY & SAFETY - Reduction to 60kph -**

### **Reason for Support - typical comments:**

## **Safety Implications**

- Drivers have adapted well to the lower speed limits.
- Saves lives, children present.
- It is a short distance and it is much safer to be 60kph.
- Improved safety
- The slower 60km speed sits well with the mixed and high use (houses, boats, school, people).
- Safety around the area as at times there are many cars and pedestrians
- Many people go to the Store, and have to cross the road if they come by boat. Dangerous
- The small 80 KM section should change to 60KM, so it would be 60 KM all the way along this section as there are houses, shops, boat ramp and a hotel.
- The road has many bends and the high number of logging trucks on this road increases risk for people living along the road and people using the lake.
- Safer for our tamariki
- This is a busy area with a school, the cafe (and it's traffic), rafting, the boat ramp - lots of people crossing roads. One slower speed limit seems sensible and fit-for-purpose.
- Let's just go 60km for this small stretch of road which is essentially going through the Okere village.

## **Rotoiti Community Support for CONSISTENCY & SAFETY - Reduction to 60kph -**

### **Reason for Support - typical comments:**

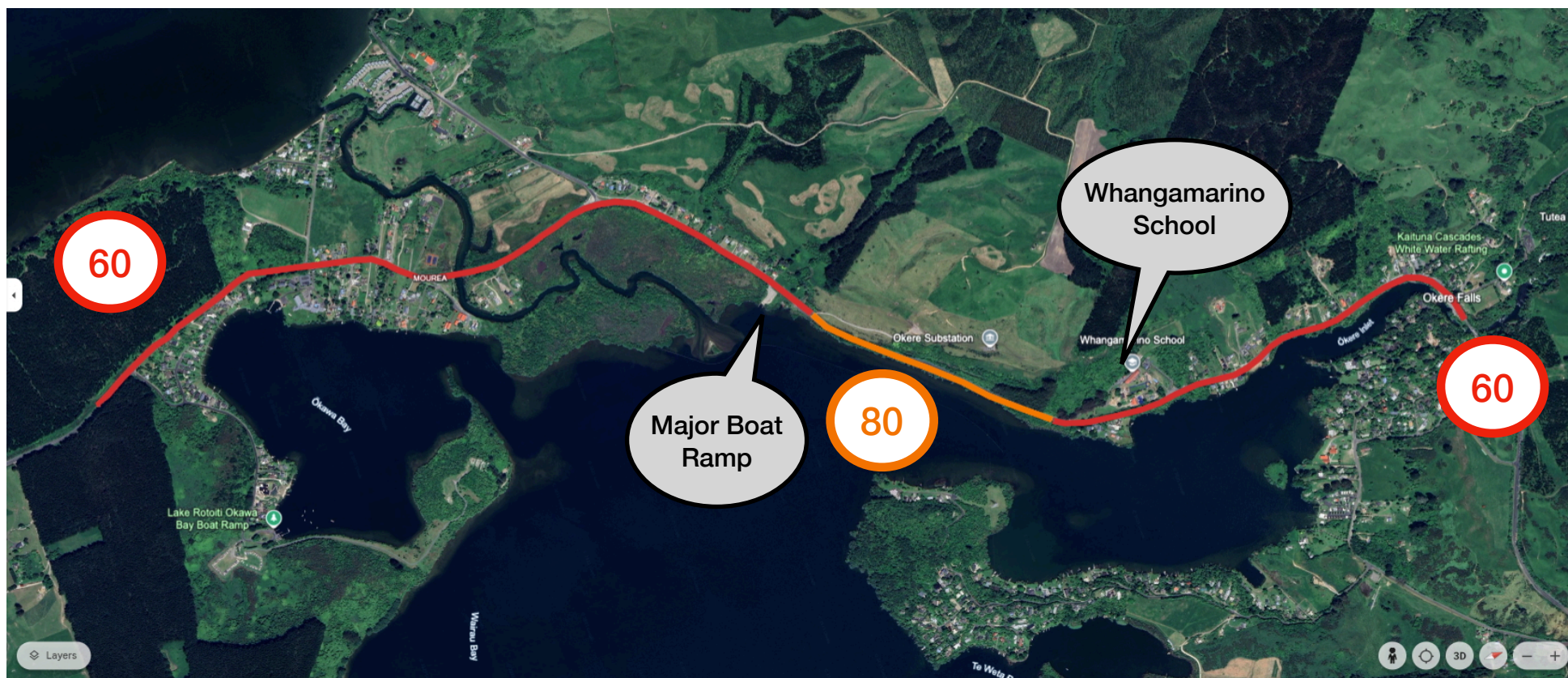
### **Safety Implications - (continued)**

- To prevent dangerous overtaking of other vehicles
- Safety, no confusion with multiple speed limit changes in short order
- Consistent speed limit safer, there is foot traffic in this area, accelerating thru this stretch is also wasteful of petrol, increasing risk with n benefit
- Having a limit over 60 just leads to vehicles driving too fast through the adjacent communities. It is right next to a school. The addition of a virtually unridable cycle path here makes the road even narrower.
- They have just proven that brake dust is worse for your health than most of the other vehicle emissions that they estimate kill about 1500 NZers a year. Why would we choose to dump this pollution at Waimarino school.
- Safer and the short distance will not impact travel time

## Risks of Vehicles NOT Slowing to 60kph in Adjacent Sections -

### Overview - Short 850m Section at 80kph - Risks safety of whole 60kph Section of SH33 From Okawa Bay to Okere Falls

Note small length of section concerned, just 850m, which does not justify an increased speed and the risks for the community of vehicles missing the reduce speed signs and carrying on at higher speeds where it is dangerous to do so. Note how close Whangamarino Junior School and the Waipuna Bay Boat ramp are to the end of the orange 80kph section.



## Risks of Vehicles NOT Slowing to **60**kph in Adjacent Sections -

### Okawa Bay to Mourea Communities & Visitors at Risk

Note the size of the community and the number of entities whose members/visitors etc are put at risk:

- 1**, Bay of Plenty Yacht Squadron, **2**, Okawa Bay Boat Ramp, **3**, Okawa Bay Community, **4**, Rotoititi Water Shuttles, **5**, VR Rotorua Lake Resort, **6**, Pikiaro Rugby League Club, **7**, Mourea Mini Mart & Take Away, **8**, Te Takinga Marae, **9**, Waiatui Marae, **10**, Ramada Resort &, **11**, Oahu Wall Boat Ramp.



## Risks of Vehicles NOT Slowing to 60kph in Adjacent Sections -

### Whangamarino School to Okere Falls Communities & Visitors at Risk

Note the size of the community and the number of entities whose members/visitors etc are put at risk:

**1**, Rotoiti Lake Cruises, **2**, Whangamarino School, **3**, Lake Rotoiti Holiday Park, **4**, Rafting Adventure NZ, **5**, Rotoiti Fire Station, **6**, Okere Falls Refuse Centre, **7**, Okere Falls Community, **8**, Okere Falls Store & Beer Garden, **9**, Okere Falls Wharf, **10**, Rotorua Ziplines, **11**, Kaituna/Rotorua White Water Rafting, **12**, Rotoiti Control Gates, **13**, White Water Kayak Course, **14**, Kaituna Cascades White Water Rafting, **15**, Okere Falls & Track, & **16**, Trout Pool Reserve & Camp Ground.



12 March 2025

## Letter of Support from Whangamarino School

**They are mere metres away from the northern end of the section concerned and the Deputy Principle comments as follows:**

*“We propose that the short section of road that increases to 80km (Between the Boat Ramp and the school) is reduced to 60km also, as there is traffic that speeds up for this section when travelling towards the schools main entrance, and they do not slow down again for the 60km section of road that passes the school.*

*Our tamariki/children who live in the local communities walk, run, play, ride bikes along these road ways, they regularly cross the roads to access whānau homes, marae, play areas and swimming places. It is in the best interests of the children of the Mourea and Okera Falls communities that the slower speed limits remain as they are, and that the short stretch of 80km is reduced to 60km”.*

**From:** Teina Mear teina@whangamarino.school.nz  
**Subject:** Speed Limit Reversals - Viws of Whangamarino School  
**Date:** 28 February 2025 at 12:04 PM  
**To:** lrca@rotoiti.co.nz



Kia Ora Tom,

Thank you for getting in touch to seek out our schools view on the proposed speed limit changes for our community. I am the Deputy Principal of Whangamarino School.

It is our strong preference that the speed of 60km remain for traffic passing our two school entranceways. We have two school buses, and two school vans transporting children, that come and go from our school at least twice a day, and on some days multiple times a day as we go out on school trips and outings regularly. It has always been a dangerous piece of road, and we have definitely noticed the traffic traveling much slower since the reduction in speed to 60km. We strongly support the speed limit past the school remaining at 60km.

As many of our students live in the local communities of Mourea and Okere, we also oppose any of the speed limits through these communities rising. It is imperative that the speed limit remain at 60km right through Mourea and Okere Falls. We even propose that the short section of road that increases to 80km (Between the Boat Ramp and the school) is reduced to 60km also, as there is traffic that speeds up for this section when travelling towards the schools main entrance, and they do not slow down again for the 60km section of road that passes the school. Our tamariki/children who live in the local communities walk, run, play, ride bikes along these road ways, they regularly cross the roads to access whānau homes, marae, play areas and swimming places. It is in the best interests of the children of the Mourea and Okera Falls communities that the slower speed limits remain as they are, and that the short stretch of 80km is reduced to 60km.

Thank you again for reaching out for our views. We hope that the decision makers take into account the views being expressed by many, especially the Lake Rotoiti Community Association on behalf of the local residents and groups.

If you want any further information from me, please don't hesitate to get in touch again.

Ngā mihi nui,



**Whaea Teina Mear**

**Tumuaki Tuarua | SENCO**

**Akomanga Tuakana**

**Whangamarino School**

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**E: [teina@whangamarino.school.nz](mailto:teina@whangamarino.school.nz)**

**W: <https://whangamarino.school.nz>**

*“Kia pono ki ō mahi kia whai hua ai.”*

## Submission Conclusion

We thank Waka Kotahi for the opportunity to participate in your SH33 Speed Limit Review.

The Okawa Bay Okere Falls area is a natural focus for our lake community encouraged by its location and the growing success of its local businesses - an award winning cafe & beer garden, famous white water rafting, zip line and kayaking waters, major resorts and 2 Marae. One of our 2 junior schools is also situated here just metres from the current speed change. Notably Rotoiti is also the most fished lake in NZ!

The high level of concern for the safety for our ever increasing community and visitor population is reflected in the strong response we have had from our members favouring the 850m 80kph Section SH33 from Okere Falls to South of Waipuna Bay being reduced to 60kph to match adjoining 60kph sections of SH33.

The speed reduction reversal review for this section suggesting that the speed could be increased to 100kph is not appropriate given Waka Kotahi's own speed rule guidelines which require a 100kph section to be a minimum of 2,000 metres. Even the alternative current 80kph section only just sneaks in over the guideline's 800 metre minimum length by 50 metres!

It is clear that the current speed limit configuration is seen as being both inconsistent and confusing by locals - just imagine what it must be like for visitors and tourists! Likewise safety is a major concern with the high level of community activity in the area which frequently requires crossing the highway - often on foot. Motorists missing speed reduction signs and continuing at speed unnecessarily increases the danger!

**We thus respectfully submit that Waka Kotahi take this opportunity to**

**reduce the speed limit to 60kph for the 850m 80kph Section of SH33 from Okere Falls to South of Waipuna Bay**

**to be consistent with it's own Rule, to match the adjoining Sections & to keep our Community & Visitors safe.**

12 March 2025

**For Further information please contact:**

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