

Consultation on Lane Use Improvements

Submission to New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/public-consultation-hub/current-consultations/consultation-on-lane-use-improvements>

2026-03-25

Please tell us the name of the business or organisation: **Travel Friendly** (<https://swapone.nz/schools/>) and **Nelson Tasman Climate Forum** (<https://www.nelsontasmanclimateforum.nz/>)

Proposal 1: allow children aged 12 years and under to ride their bikes on footpaths

P1.1 Do you agree with allowing children aged 12 years and under to ride bikes on footpaths?

Yes

Travel Friendly and NTCF strongly support allowing children aged 12 years and under to ride bikes on footpaths, rather than travelling on roads. This would remove the anomaly that it is common practice and it is much safer for them for being able to travel to school, friends etc, yet it doesn't comply with the law.

This change will help build early confidence in active travel and encourages lifelong sustainable transport habits from a young age. By creating safer, low-stress environments for children and students to cycle, it reduces reliance on car trips for school travel and supports healthier, low-emission daily journeys for families and communities to make cycling a normal, accessible choice.

P1.2 Are there any other impacts that need to be considered (such as safety, accessibility, and compliance) if the proposal is implemented?

Yes

We welcome the intention to provide guidance to promote safe and considerate riding on footpaths. One particular need is for children being alert for cars crossing footpaths whilst they move into or out of driveways.

Proposal 2: set a minimum overtaking gap when drivers pass other road users (cyclists, horse riders etc) of at least

- *1 metre when passing at speed limits of 60 km/h or less, and*
- *1.5 metres when passing at speed limits above 60 km/h.*

P2.1 Do you agree with introducing a minimum passing distance when drivers overtake other road users (such as cyclists, horse riders, and micro-mobility users)?

Yes

We strongly support introducing a minimum passing gap, as it creates safer conditions for those choosing active travel as an alternative to high-carbon travel such as cars. Most drivers are considerate, but a small minority are causes of near-misses and accidents, in which the active transport user would almost certainly be the casualty.

Clear standards for driver behaviour in Aotearoa NZ will make cycling a more attractive, safe and viable option, particularly for students and new riders who may otherwise feel unsafe. Safety on roads is currently a large barrier for students and adults when it comes to active travel. This measure supports a shift toward low-carbon transport by making our roads safer and more inclusive, encouraging more people to choose bikes and other sustainable modes for everyday travel.

P2.2 Are there any other impacts that need to be considered (such as safety, accessibility, and compliance) if the proposal is implemented?

Yes

To promote consistency of messaging, we recommend a 1.5 m passing distance regardless of the speed limit zone.

As the discussion document notes, there may be challenges in tight spaces, like narrow roads or busy streets, where drivers may have to slow down or wait longer before overtaking. However, these are also situations where people walking or cycling are most at risk, which is why this safety rule is being proposed.

We propose for such situations that signs be used like those recently posted on the Appleby SH60 bridge (to replace an electronic 'cyclist on bridge' warning signal that had failed). This is a narrow bridge with restricted visibility because of the bridge's curved structure, in an 80 km/h speed limit zone. It has substantial heavy vehicle traffic. The new sign shows a 40 km/h speed limit when there is a cyclist/s on the bridge, creating a clear legal expectation. We would like to see this applied in all

similar situations. Better yet for bridges like this would be a dedicated cycleway with a clip-on.

To promote understanding between drivers and other road users, we highly recommend that NZTA WK promote greater understanding of the rules governing passing cyclists when there is a yellow no passing line, as we understand is authoritatively described in this article:

<https://cyclingchristchurch.co.nz/2018/05/19/can-you-overtake-a-bike-now-on-dyers-pass-rd/>.

Proposal 3: allow e-scooters to use cycle lanes

P3.1 Do you agree with allowing e-scooters to be used in cycle lanes?

Yes

E-scooters are currently legal on roads and footpaths

(<https://nzta.govt.nz/walking-cycling-and-public-transport/walking/travelling-as-a-pedestrian/using-e-scooters-and-low-powered-vehicles>). We agree with the

discussion document that because e-scooters and bikes travel at similar speeds and face similar risks, cycle lanes (where available) are the most appropriate place for e-scooters. The change is keeping up with technological development and would enhance e-scooter safety.

It also will provide for a more integrated sustainable transport network. Providing dedicated space for low-emission micromobility options reduces conflicts with vehicles and makes it easier for people, including students, to adopt alternatives to car travel. This helps normalise shared, space-efficient transport and supports a transition to cleaner urban mobility.

P3.2 Are there any other impacts that need to be considered (such as safety, accessibility, and compliance) if the proposal is implemented?

Yes.

The NZTA WK website 'strongly recommend(s) that e-scooter riders wear helmets.' Given the higher rate of injury of e-scooter riders than cyclists

(<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/what-you-need-to-know/517651/the-rules-that-apply-to-electric-scooters-what-you-need-to-know>), and that it is compulsory to

wear a helmet when on a bike in (we understand) all road and cycle path situations, there is a very strong case similarly for making helmet wearing compulsory for e-scooter riders.

E-scooters can run at speeds of up to 25 km/h, and safety must be prioritised while encouraging active travel.

Proposal 4: require drivers travelling below 60km/hr to give way to buses leaving bus stops

P4.1 Do you support introducing a legal requirement for drivers to give way to buses leaving bus stops on roads with speed limits of 60 km/h or less?

Yes

We support requiring drivers to give way to buses, as it improves the efficiency and reliability of public transport. Providing it is safely practiced by all parties, facilitating bus transport encourages greater uptake among students and commuters, reducing private vehicle use and climate pollution (with its social and environmental costs). Prioritising public transport is key to creating a more sustainable, low-carbon transport system.

P4.2 Are there any other impacts that need to be considered (such as safety, accessibility, and compliance) if the proposal is implemented?

Yes

The discussion document doesn't recognise the potential improved safety for children from the proposal.

It is already the case that drivers must slow to a maximum speed of 20 km/h when passing a school bus that has stopped to pick up or drop off children, regardless of which direction they are travelling, and regardless of the road's speed limit. Requiring drivers to give way to ALL buses leaving bus stops would reinforce a consistent child safety priority for drivers, as school children and young people are frequent users also of non-school buses.

Proposal 5: clarify that signage isn't required for road controlling authorities to prohibit parking on berms.

P5.1 Do you agree with the proposal to clarify that signage is not required for berm parking rules to be enforceable?

Yes

We support the proposal to clarify that signage is not required for berm parking rules to be enforceable.

We also support clearer and more consistent signage for berm parking restrictions. Protecting pedestrian spaces improves accessibility and safety, particularly for students walking or using active modes. Well-managed public space encourages

active transport and supports sustainable travel choices by making streets more usable and welcoming for everyone.

P5.2 Are there any other impacts that need to be considered (such as safety, accessibility, and compliance) if the proposal is implemented?

Not sure

We have no specific feedback to this question.