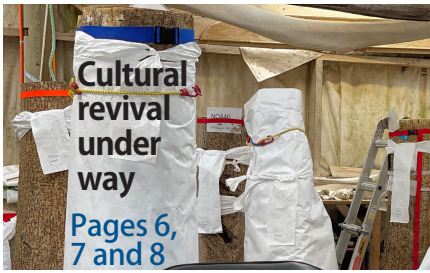


Inside today



WDC send speed-limit proposals to the NZTA

THERE will likely be lower speed limits around the Wairoa township following Wairoa District Council (WDC) adoption of an interim speed management plan last month.

With 23 people making submissions, the council table have three speed-limit change proposals that will now be sent to New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) for approval.

The proposed changes are:

- Marine Parade from Murrae Street to the campground at 30kmh.
- Streets outside all schools at 30kmh excluding Mōhaka and Putere School. The speed limit changes would be a mixture of variable and static.
- Speed reductions to be supported with complimentary infrastructure such as speed humps, raised crossings, signage, road markings or kerb build outs.

Of 24 submissions in WDC's Extraordinary Council Meeting last month, only two submitters disagreed with the general direction of the interim speed management plan.

No one disagreed with lowering speeds outside schools or along Marine Parade.

Additional comments in the submissions included:

- the need for speed restrictions along Kaiwaitau Road and Lahore Street
- crossings at schools in the Wairoa township
- speed bumps as a way to slow down traffic
- a lack of promotion about the consultation.

Three submitters spoke to the WDC table about Marine Parade and Achilles Street.

Bernadine Hamlin shared Wairoa College concerns about vehicles not doing 50kmh when they enter the town.

"The town entry is close to the school gates where a lot of our students will cross the road.

"There are vehicles doing well over 50kmh when they pass the Wairoa signs and it is not until the electronic signs that they begin to slow down."

Councillor Roz Thomas asked what the costs were of an electronic sign compared to other signs.

Group manager for assets and infrastructure Mike Hardie said electronics were \$15,000.

"In comparison other signage is a grand."

Gabriela Kopacikova and Matteo Garbagnati suggested Marine Parade could become a dedicated area for pedestrians and bicycles.

"Having lower speed along the main



LIKELY SPEED RESTRICTIONS: Marine Parade between Murrae Street and the camping ground and school areas may drop to 30km/h if New Zealand Transport Agency approve an interim speed management plan.

road of the township will save lives and increase the visibility of the town centre for locals and visitors when driving through from the bridge," says Ms Kopacikova.

"It will support local businesses through more interaction and foot traffic."

Mr Garbagnati is interested in an urban design for Marine Parade.

"It could look like Federal Street in Auckland or with sitting areas between two lanes of road."

Mr Hardie liked the idea and said WDC had earlier applied for NZTA's Streets for People funding programme.

"We were declined funding but we should give it another go."

St Joseph's Wairoa principal Jo Doyle emailed a submission saying she supported the speed reductions and wanted Queen Street to be a consideration.

"How many people cross the road on Queen Street and where?"

"Collect data for the biggest areas of concern, when we take the kids to the pool, it is too dangerous to cross the road."

A draft design from engineering consultants WSP suggested a road crossing be put in by Kahungunu Executive.

Councillors were unsure whether to have a pedestrian crossing there or further east again.

People jaywalking and not using the existing crossing was another factor they considered.

NZTA were planning to talk to the WDC Infrastructure Committee this year said Mr Hardie.

Wairoa Mayor Craig Little said it was a great idea for the big picture.

WDC had planned to cover the whole district for its interim speed plan but Mr Hardie said a certain amount of work had to be done by July 2024.

"We chose schools for the safety of children and Marine Parade because it is a high pedestrian area.



HOLIDAY OVER READY FOR THE CHALLENGE: Wairoa and Hawke's Bay health professionals and iwi partners warmly embraced the new Wairoa Hospital manager, right, Peter Whalley with Erica Smith and her parents, left, John and Jane Smith.

New hospital manager embraced at pōwhiri

CONNECTIONS were made for the new Wairoa Hospital manager Peter Whalley across the rohe after his pōwhiri at the hospital on Monday mid-morning.

The speakers on behalf of Mr Whalley at the pōwhiri were Anaru Hodges, Pou Whirinaki Hinengaro Māori and kaumātua Tiwana Aranui.

During the whakawhanaungatanga, iwi partners and non-government organisations and Te Whatu Ora Māori health representatives all welcomed him warmly, introducing themselves and their respective roles.

Several spoke of the staffing challenge for Wairoa and how they hoped that Mr Whalley could help them train specialists with local ties and future leaders in the health sector.

Others urged him to listen to the locals and put whānau first especially their mokopuna.

"If you really want to make change, you

help the moko," said Angela Culshaw-Kaisa.

"Never make a promise you can't keep — whānau will quickly get disheartened.

"It is more they are focused on the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle, but this year is going to be a good year according to the maramataka (Māori calendar)."

In addition to community partnership links, nursing, midwifery and iwi partners, a director of allied health services from Mahia said she represented 27 different professions including physiotherapy, pharmacy and radiotherapy and they all needed to attract more staff and specialists, training locals and encourage them to return home.

General manager of Kahungunu Executive Sarah Paku said she was studying his face, trying to look behind it, during the pōwhiri and thought he might be stoic, but also possessed a nice smile.

"It is about sharing a part of you."

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