

## Why we're improving safety

We want everyone who uses SH1 to get where they are going, safely.

### SH1 Cambridge to Piarere 2017 to 2021<sup>1</sup>

**21**   
serious crashes causing  
deaths and serious injuries



**6**  
people  
died



**26**  
seriously  
injured

We have a national safety crisis on our hands. On average, someone dies every day on our roads and seven people are reported seriously injured, with many more minor injuries going unreported. The effect of this trauma on families, communities, and the nation is devastating.

Delivering these safety improvements is an important part of Road to Zero – Aotearoa New Zealand's road safety strategy. Waka Kotahi is focused on Vision Zero where no one is killed or seriously injured on our roads by building the safest road system we can. People being killed and seriously injured on our roads is both unacceptable, and preventable. It is time to stop accepting that deaths and injuries are the price we all pay for moving around.

When we think of serious crashes, people often think of drunk drivers, extreme speeds, or people behaving recklessly. But many crashes involve everyday people not doing anything extreme at all.

A study from the AA Research Foundation found that in around ¾ of crashes where vehicle occupants were seriously injured, drivers had generally followed the road rules.<sup>2</sup> They had simply made a poor decision – a simple error of judgement – or something unexpected happened, and the road system was unforgiving.

Road to Zero accepts that people are vulnerable, and we make mistakes. Preventing deaths is about more than how we drive – it involves all parts of the system. We need safer roads and infrastructure, speeds that are safe for each road, safer vehicles, and sober drivers who wear seatbelts, obey speed limits and focus on the task of driving.



## 1 Cambridge to Piarere short-term safety improvements



### Have your say

Let us know what you think by **9 December 2022** via the below options, or scan the QR code.



[nzta.govt.nz/c2p](https://nzta.govt.nz/c2p)



Email [c2p@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:c2p@nzta.govt.nz)



Phone **0800 44 44 49**

### To scan the QR code

Open your QR app or the camera on your mobile device, and hover over the QR code to be directed to our website.



Scan me

We're improving the safety of State Highway 1 from Cambridge to Piarere while we work to deliver the proposed four-lane expressway. We want people to be safer as they travel along this section of SH1, which has seen a number of fatal and serious injury crashes. These safety improvements support our Road to Zero vision – a vision where everyone can get to where they are going, safely.

<sup>1</sup> Analysis of fatal and serious crashes on SH1 from 100m east of the Tirau Rd on-ramp to 100m west of the SH29 off-slip lane, 2017 to 2021 inclusive.

<sup>2</sup> Source: AA Directions Autumn 2019

# What's happening

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is committed to improving safety between Cambridge and Piarere on SH1. Long-term, we are planning for a 16km, four-lane expressway connecting the southern end of the Cambridge section of the Waikato Expressway to the intersection of SH1 and SH29 at Piarere. While our mahi on this is progressing it will be a number of years before construction can begin. Current work is to obtain consent approvals and funding is to be secured for full property purchases and construction.

There are things we can do right now to save lives on this high-risk stretch of SH1. The community has been devastated by fatal and serious injury crashes - each and every one results in unimaginable pain and suffering to whānau and the wider community of the people involved.

Waka Kotahi has been engaging with many in the community including Ngāti Koroki Kahukura and Ngāti Hauā, Waipa, South Waikato and Matamata Piako District Councils, Waikato Regional Council, emergency services and freight representatives, as well as with landowners and other stakeholders.

Local people know their roads, and we want to record community feedback on the draft plans now. We will combine this local knowledge with our technical data to determine the final design. Funding has been secured for the safety infrastructure construction, and work will start as soon as possible after designs are finalised.



## Median barriers

Flexible median barriers save lives. Up to 75% of the people who die or are seriously injured on rural roads have either had a head-on collision or have run off the road. The proven solution to preventing head-on crashes is to physically separate opposing traffic, using flexible median barriers. If someone loses control or drifts across the centreline, the result isn't a deadly crash; instead, the steel cables flex, absorb the impact, slow your vehicle and keep it upright.

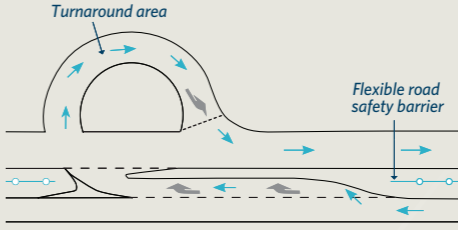
Completed in December 2020, 2.5km of flexible median barriers were installed from south of Fergusson Gully. Already the barrier has been hit 40 times - that means 40 potentially deadly head-on crashes were avoided.

A further 1.6km of flexible median barrier was installed just north of Maungatautari Road earlier this year, along with some road layout changes.

Additional flexible median barrier will be installed shortly, starting just south of Maungatautari Road. At the same time, the road will be resurfaced, and the short southbound passing lane will be taken out. Drivers accelerating to pass here often find themselves having to brake hard at the top of the hill when they encounter slower traffic negotiating the SH1/29 intersection.

Further median barriers will be installed between the unnamed reserve (where the current median barrier finishes) to past Kentucky Road. On completion, expected to be March 2023, we will have a total of 7.7kms of flexible median barrier installed from Fergusson Gully Road to near the SH1/SH29 intersection.

We are now finalising designs to install median barriers and other safety features further north, from the end of the Waikato Expressway through to Fergusson Gully Road. This section is more complex, as it involves multiple intersections, accessways and properties. We would like to hear your thoughts on what is currently proposed.



## Turnarounds

For many people (and their visitors) who live on SH1 and the roads off SH1 in this area, the installation of median barriers means that turning right out of their entrance or road will no longer be possible. We are therefore providing regular turnarounds to offer a safe place to turn right across the highway; a small inconvenience in return for a huge improvement in safety. These turnarounds will be sign-posted, and big enough to accommodate large vehicles. The proposed locations are near Gorton, Tunakawa, Newcombe and Hickey roads, and Keeley's Reserve. Turnarounds will be in place before the flexible median barriers are installed.

## Karāpiro Road/SH1 roundabout

A roundabout is proposed on this high risk and very busy intersection. This will also improve safe access to the Karāpiro School and the businesses nearby.

## Maintenance

There is maintenance planned for this Cambridge to Piarere corridor. We are working with the maintenance contractors to ensure as little disruption as possible is caused, so we will be combining our safety infrastructure installation with planned maintenance.

## Temporary initiatives including speed management

The speed limit has been temporarily reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h from near the end of the Waikato Expressway to just past the intersection of SH1 with Karāpiro Road. This is a temporary measure until more permanent safety infrastructure is in place. Other safety improvements being implemented in the next few weeks include:

- 'High Crash Area' signs north of Hickey Road and south of Karāpiro Road have been put in so people are aware of the upcoming risks.
- We are also planning to install wide painted median strips between the end of the expressway and Fergusson Gully Road to provide more space between opposing traffic until flexible median barrier can be installed.

## Timeframes

The desired outcome is to have all construction completed within two years.



## Next steps

Consider feedback, fine tune design

Tender construction contract

Make the road safer