

Te Manawa ō Owhatiura



ROTORUA
LAKES COUNCIL
Te kaunihera o ngā roto o Rotorua

Innovating Streets
2020/2021 Report

Background:

The Innovating Streets for People programme was established by Waka Kotahi in 2018 to trial a new way of designing and delivering transportation infrastructure. It helps deliver the government's goals to create liveable cities and thriving regions and was a flagship programme for Keeping Cities Moving, the national mode shift action plan.

Te Manawa ō Owhatiura was one of the 2020-2021 Waka Kotahi Innovating Streets projects. Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) submitted a proposal for safer streets around Lynmore School and had the project accepted in May 2020.

Why Lynmore School was chosen as the site for an Innovating Streets project

Lynmore School, roll 600+, has traffic and congestion issues during peak commute times. RLC frequently receive emails from parents and community identifying the poor driving behaviours during peak times. Issues include congestion, dangerous driving, illegal parking and drivers using roads near the school to bypass Te Ngae Road. While these issues have been long-standing, it seems a desire to avoid delays on Te Ngae Road (Waka Kotahi upgrade) is resulting in a growing number of reports that drivers are speeding through the streets that surround Lynmore School.

The Safe and Sustainable Journeys Team at RLC works across the district to improve road safety and encourage mode shift. The team has worked with the school on road safety issues for many years, providing support in the form of road safety education, Cycle Skills training and coordinating with Police to manage poor driving behaviour.

RLC ran two pre-project surveys to assess community interest in a project here. A resident survey showed that:

- Respondents considered this area (roads around Lynmore School) to be of major road safety concern, requiring support to make progress towards accelerating the rate of active mode uptake.
- Most respondents indicated that sustained behaviour change towards active modes will only occur if the roads surrounding the school were engineered in such a way that active modes become more attractive and feel safer.

The Safe Ways to School Survey undertaken at Lynmore School in February 2020 showed that:

- 54% of parents predominantly use car transport for the school commute.
- Parents choose car transport mostly due to convenience and road safety.
- The primary reasons not to walk, bike or scooter are convenience and road safety.
- 89% of parents would like their child/ren to be able to walk/ bike to school always or sometimes.

RLC also liaised with Rotorua Cycle Action to assess the suitability of various site options for an Innovating Streets Project.

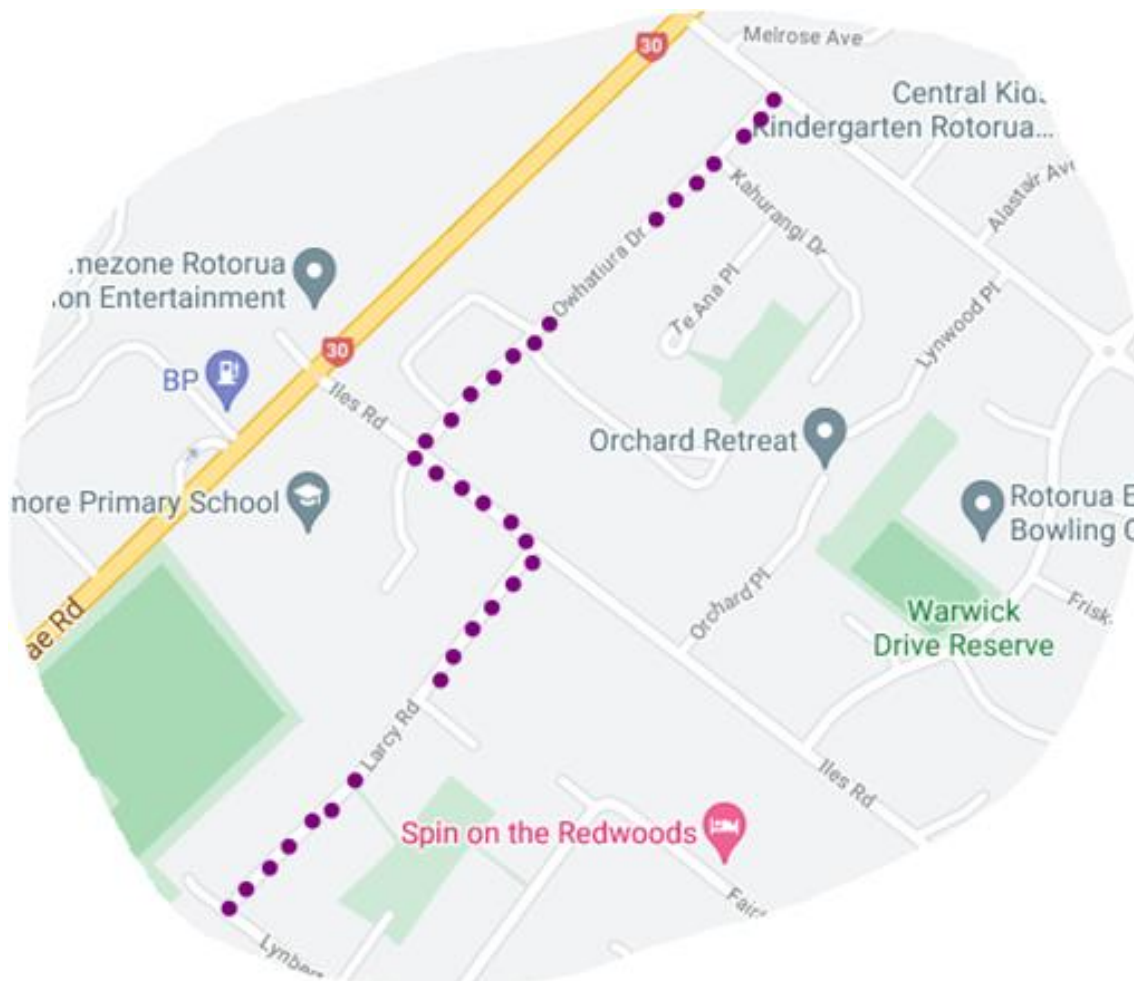
The streets around Lynmore School were eventually chosen for a project due to the potential for improvement, and support from the school and the wider community. This project also fitted with the framework of the Eastside Structure Wellness Plan, supporting a well-planned, connected and thriving community.

Area

The streets included in the project were chosen due to a combination of budget constraints, highlighted issues, ability to implement new crossing points and how they linked in with the Eastside connectivity plan. The project scope included Owhatiura Drive, Larcy Rd and the section of Iles Rd between these two streets. Included in the project area were:

- 1 km of residential road
- Lynmore Primary School
- Best Start Lynmore Early Childhood Education Centre
- Lynmore Rise - Retirement Village

The project did not include the drop off area or grounds of Lynmore Primary School.



Project Set Up:

Project team

The first step in the process was to set up and consult with a project team.

- Rotorua Lakes Council worked closely with a core Community Working Group consisting of members from the Rotorua Cycling Action Group, Tatou Pounamu Community Collective, Police, Lynmore School staff, Lynmore School whānau, local residents and local hapū representative. This group developed the project goal, aims and success measures and were an integral part of the ongoing design and decision making process, from project conception to implementation. All planned communications, activities and design went via this group, which continued to meet after installation to monitor feedback, discuss changes and pathways to permanence.
- A group of senior Lynmore students helped with the identification of problems the students of Lynmore School had walking and biking to school. These problems became the base for our design and measures of success. The second workshop focussed on specific ideas to incorporate into the design, especially the on-road artwork.
- RLC staff coordinated the project and helped facilitate working group and community meetings. Specialist support was provided by Council communications, engagement and engineering staff.
- A number of school parents and staff helped with the operation of temporary crossings once they were implemented.

Goal

To create child friendly streets that allow all people to move safely around our community, through trialling physical changes to Larcy Road, Owhatiura Drive and Iles Road.

Aims

1. Provide more safe places to cross the road; by trialling crossings at more locations
2. Improve visibility; so that drivers, people on bikes and pedestrians can see each other better
3. Reduce driver speed and traffic congestion to create calmer streets for residents and safer journeys to school for tamariki
4. Create a safer and more vibrant space outside the school gate to encourage local school whānau to walk and bike through the trial project area.

What will success look like?

Short term

High importance



Safe crossings



Slow speeds



We want that too!

Short term

Medium importance



Vibrant



Connected community



Happy road users

Long term

High importance



More people
biking



More people
walking



More people
scooting

Engagement and co-design activities:

The project goal and aims were taken to the community to develop a plan.

Community drop-in session

RLC staff and members of the working group were available to answer questions and discuss ideas. We used a map of the area with design element tiles that people could place on the map to build their vision of what they would like the streets around Lynmore School to look and feel like. We used these maps and ideas to come up with a design.

Walk and talks/ meetings with residents

These face-to-face discussions helped us learn more about how vehicle drivers behaved on the local streets and what problems residents specifically had. These sessions also gave us a chance to hear concerns about the project and address them.

Letter drops/ project boards

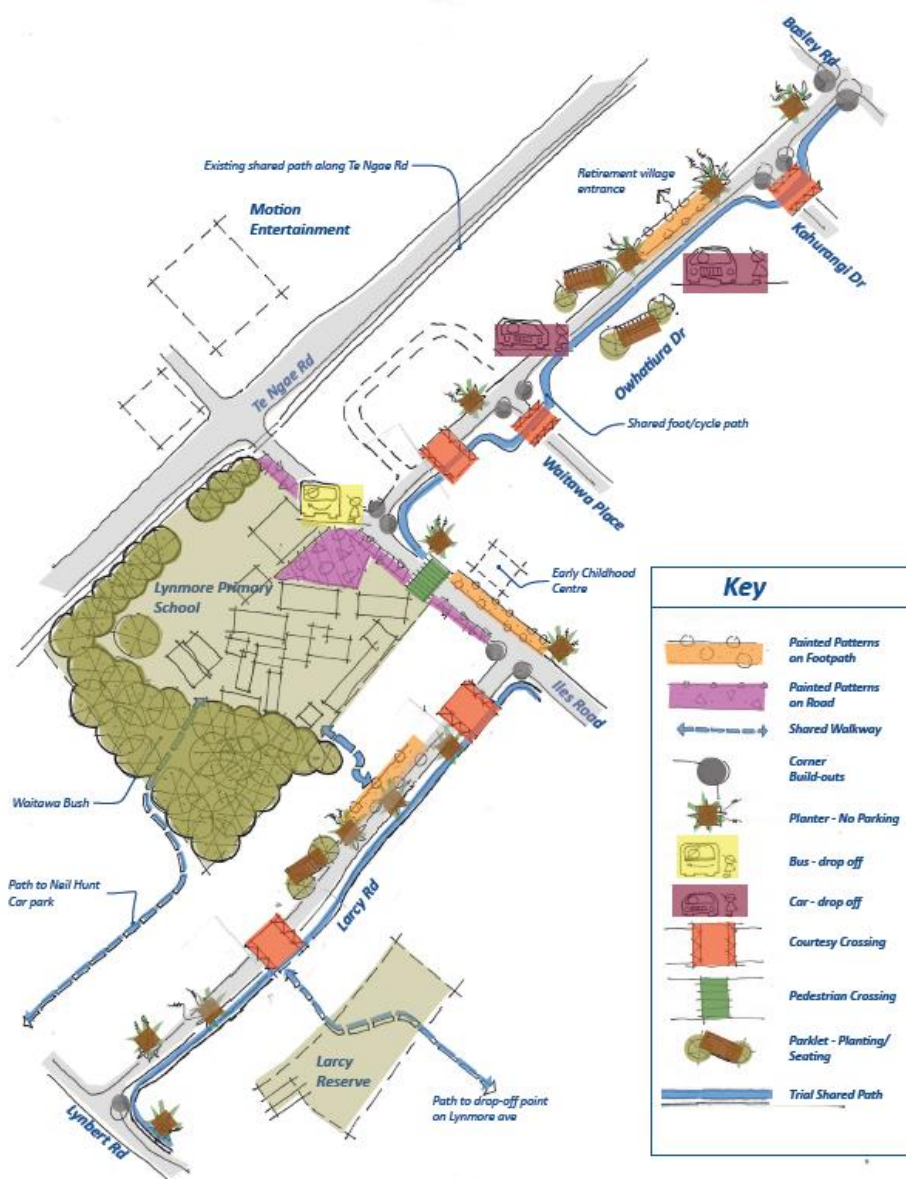
Residents of affected streets were informed of the project through letter drops and street project boards and given the opportunity to provide feedback.

Final design:

The final design included the following temporary elements which were installed in April 2021 for a trial period of 6 months – 1 year:

- 4 new crossing points – these were highlighted by planter boxes and bollards
- 1 upgraded pedestrian crossing
- Road art in front of the school
- Footpath art in front of the ECE Centre
- Bollards along the yellow lines in front of the school
- Bollards and let downs on two side streets

Te Manawa ō Owhatiura concept plan:



During the course of the project, adjustments were made to the project elements in response to safety and wellbeing issues raised by residents.

Data collection:

Vehicle speeds were measured by speed trailer between 6.30am and 5.30pm three times in the year before the project started and then approx. once a term for the duration of the trial.

Bicycle, pedestrian, and scooter numbers were collected through:

- In class travel survey – before and after the project.
- Safe Ways to School Survey – before, in 2021 (and will repeat at same time of year in 2022).
- Bike counts using vehicle speed trailer.

In addition, observations of pedestrian and vehicle traffic movements/behaviour were made before and after the project, at different locations.

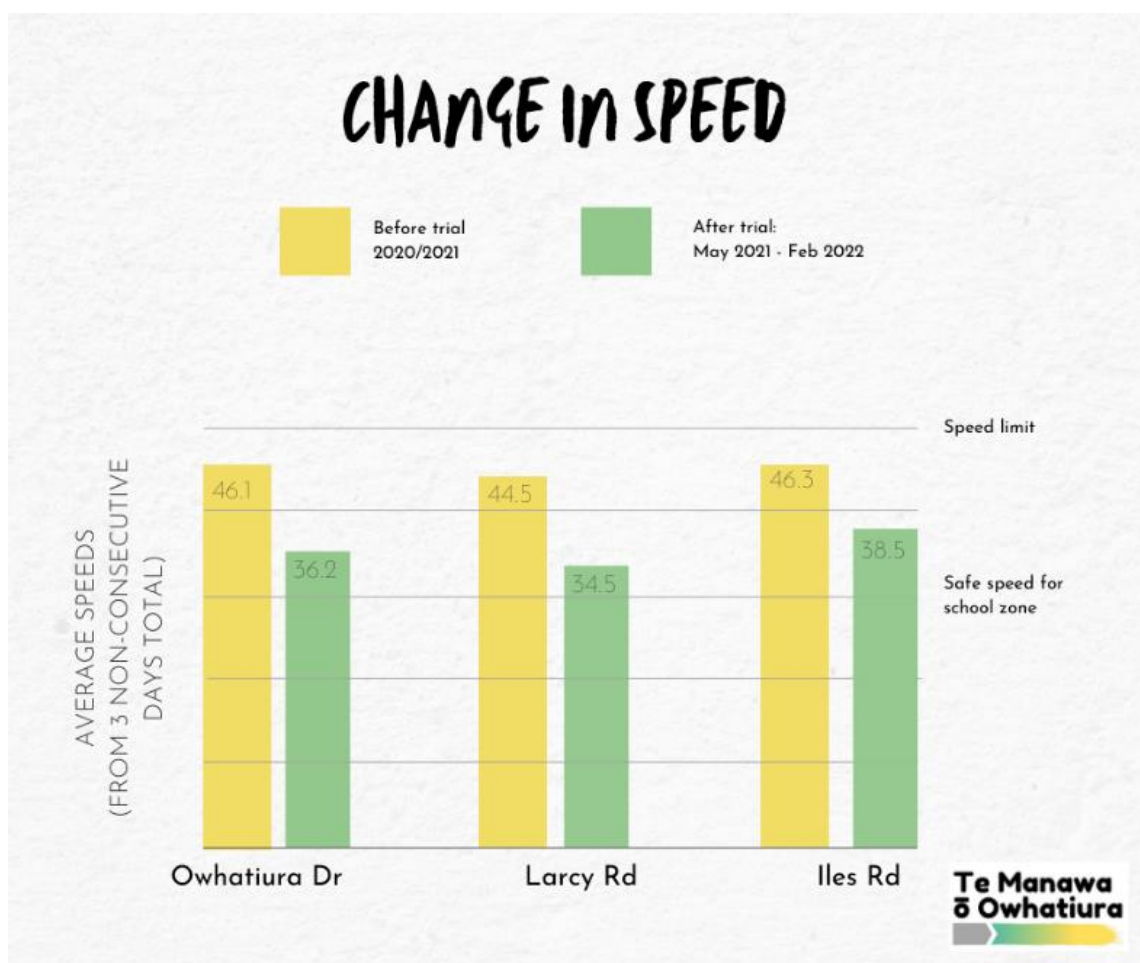
Feedback from the public (perception, sentiment and user experience) was collected through:

- On Street surveys, questioning, informal chats.
- Kōrero Mai survey – online
- Feedback from working group members and the people they had talked to.

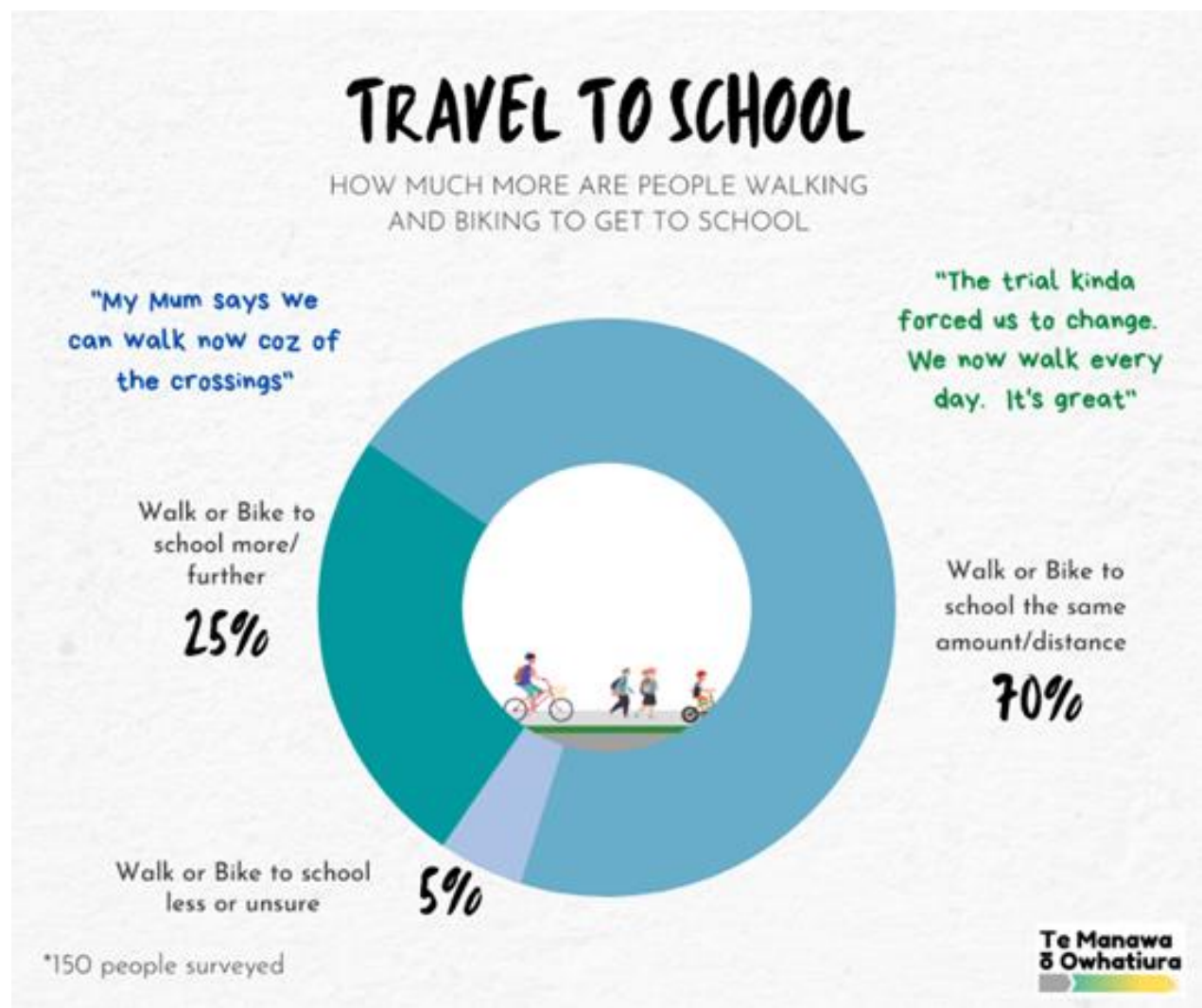
Results of the trial:

Vehicle speeds

Taken from Korero Mai Survey



Numbers biking and walking



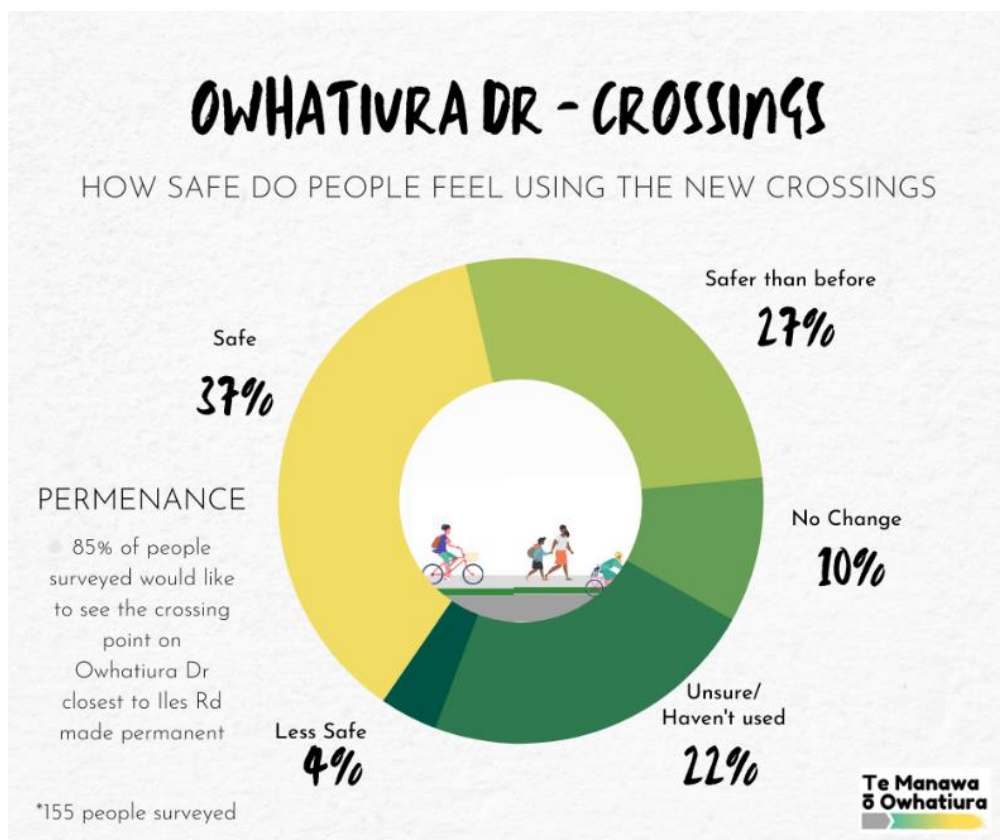
On-street observations

For the first week on-street observations were focussed on ensuring that the temporary instalments were safe, that children could see cars coming while waiting at new crossing points, and that vehicles were using the new design safely. Ongoing on-street presence fulfilled a number of goals; education, observation and gathering of feedback.



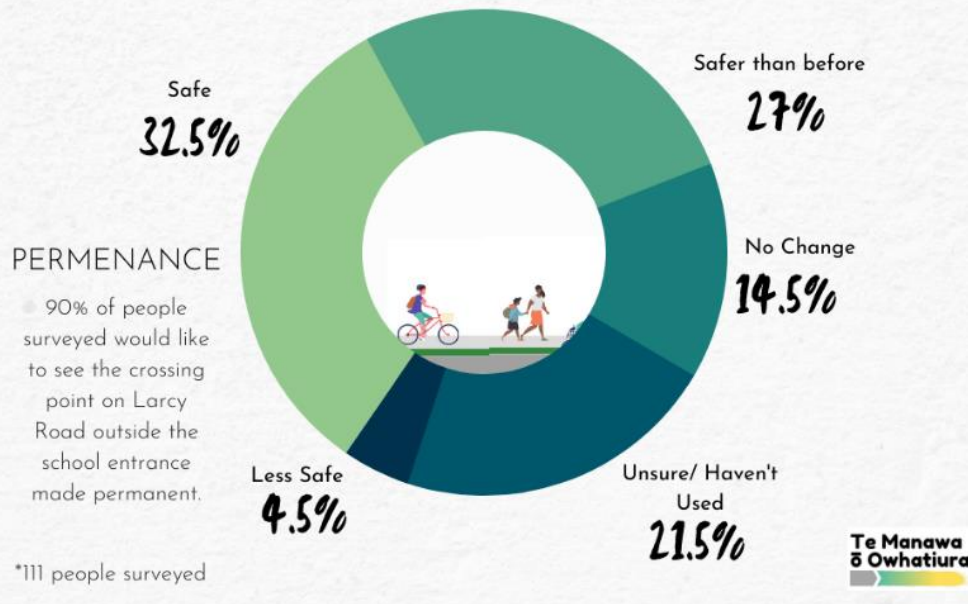
Feedback

On Korero Mai:



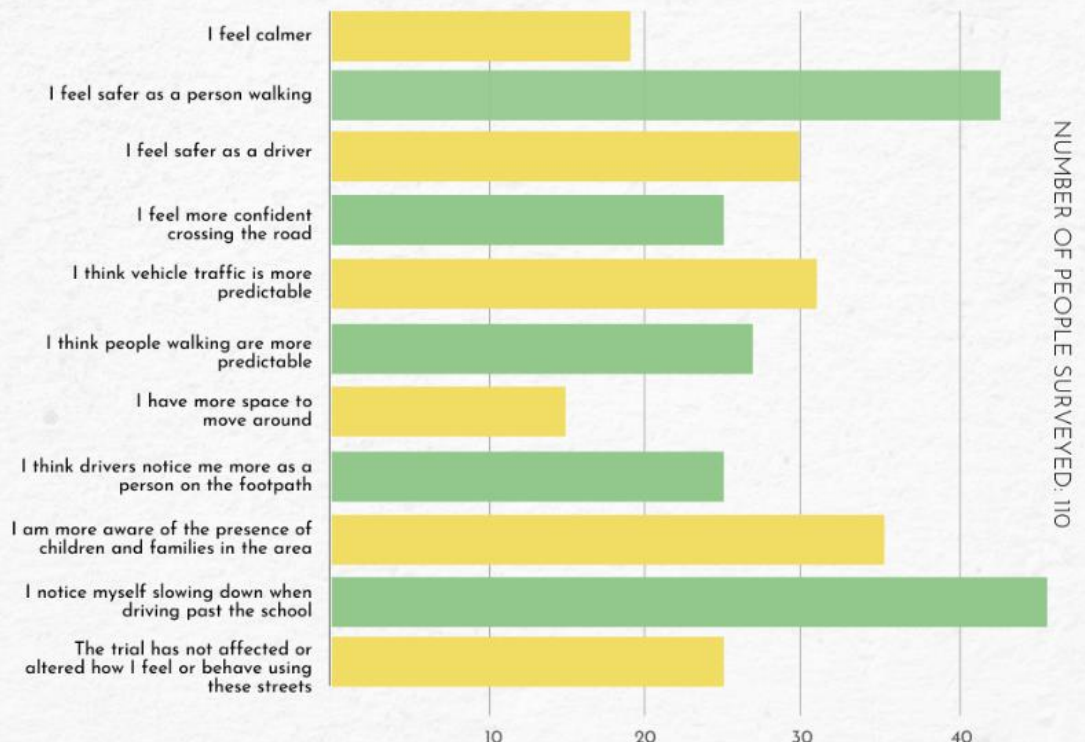
LARCY RD - CROSSINGS

HOW SAFE DO PEOPLE FEEL USING THE NEW CROSSINGS



**Te Manawa
ō Owhatiura**

HOW DO YOU FEEL MOVING THROUGH THE AREA WITH THE TRIAL ELEMENTS IN PLACE?



Quote(s) from feedback

"I would love to see some of these initiatives moved out into the wider school area"

"Now when I use the area after-school the whole atmosphere of Owhatiura road has changed...In my opinion this street is totally transformed"

"The trial kinda forced us to change. We now walk every day. It's great"

"My Mum says we can walk now coz of the crossings"

Other feedback

4 people mentioned the noise generated by the speed cushions.

6 people were unhappy about the lack of parking/ closure of the drop-off zone.

8 people commented that illegal parking behaviour is still a problem.

Several requests were made for similar improved infrastructure in the wider area – outside of the project scope. The three areas mentioned most were:

1. Intersection of Warwick Drive and Iles Road.
2. Crossing Selwyn.
3. Lynbert Rd/ Lynmore Ave intersection area.

Where to from here:

Decisions about the elements being either removed or made permanent were made by the working group based on feedback, results and support.

Larcy Road: Reserve Crossing Point = Removed

The crossing point opposite the Larcy Road Reserve has already been removed. In response to several noise complaints regarding the speed cushions at this crossing point we collected some on-street feedback. This showed that most people accept that, with a new shared path about to be built along Larcy Road, a pedestrian crossing at the Larcy Road school entrance would be beneficial, logical and removes the need for another crossing point at the Larcy Road Reserve. The crossing point and speed cushions outside 16 Larcy Road have been removed prior to the shared path going down.

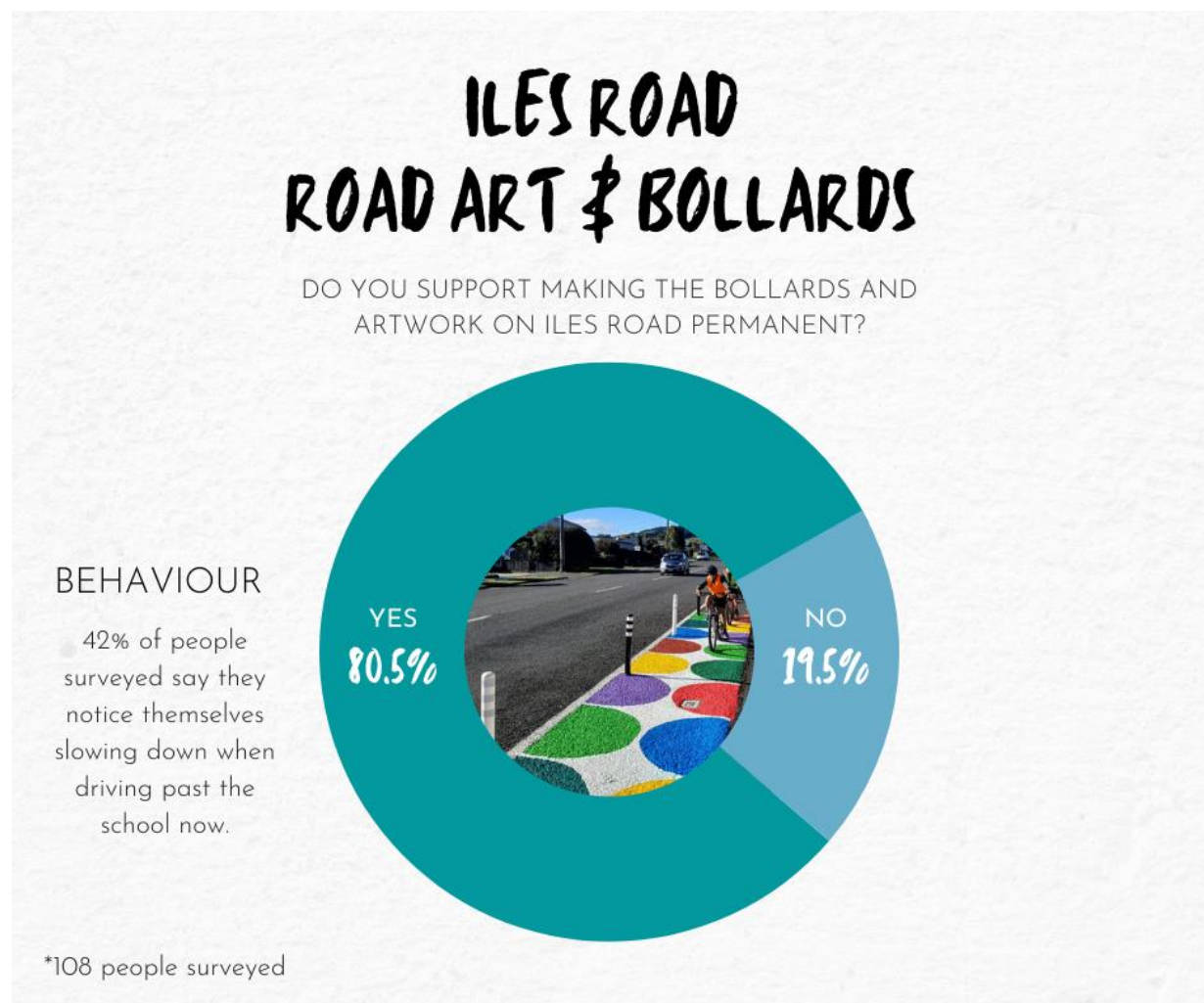
Larcy Road: School Entrance Crossing Point. = Permanent Pedestrian Crossing

The support for making this crossing permanent was overwhelming – 90% of people surveyed wanted this crossing to become permanent. The main criticism for the trial crossing here was that it should be a pedestrian crossing and that there was no path to it. Once the shared path down Larcy Road is built in early 2022, this crossing point will become a permanent pedestrian crossing.

Iles Road: Bollards and Artwork = Permanent - As is

The support for making this permanent was high – 80% of people surveyed wanted the bollards and artwork to become permanent. In addition, the speeds on Iles Road have reduced, and people surveyed said they were more aware that it was a school zone. The main criticism for the artwork was that it was ugly and there was concern that children would be tempted to play on it. We have asked Lynmore School to monitor the artwork and report any incidences of this happening. We have had no reports of children jumping onto the road to play on the artwork. The artwork was applied using 2 layers of high quality non-slip road paint. As the bollards prevent the artwork from being driven on,

we envisage it lasting well, but it will be re-painted when required. The bollards add protection for the artwork, and give the perception that the road narrows. The bollards used on Iles Road are of the highest quality and are suitable for leaving in as a permanent solution, they can be replaced as required.



Owhatiura Drive: Basley Road end Crossing point = Removal speed cushions, bar 1

We have recently received complaints about the noise of the speed cushions at this crossing point too. We need to balance this with the needs of the wider community and Lynmore School that support traffic calming, particularly whilst Stage Two of Te Ngae Rd roadworks is in progress. To that end we will remove all elements of this crossing point, except one speed cushion, in the week that school finishes - around 15 December. The single speed cushion will remain until Stage Two of Te Ngae Rd roadworks is completed. The yellow lines on the corner of Owhatiura and Kahurangi will remain. Permanent let-downs will be installed at the apex of these corners to replace the yellow ramps. At this stage the bollards will remain, but will likely be removed near the end of the one year trial period.

To further reduce speed at this corner, we will investigate installing a pedestrian refuge (rather than a raised table) at the intersection of Owhatiura and Basley Rd.

Owhatiura Drive: Iles Road end Crossing point = Permanent Crossing Point

The support for making this permanent was high – 85% of people surveyed wanted this crossing to become permanent. Waitawa Place and Owhatiua Drive have become popular places to park and stride from, or used as an alternative drop-off point for parents. Several comments mentioned the calmness of this end of Owhatiura Drive with the addition of the crossing and the yellow lines. The main criticism for the trial crossing here was that it should be a pedestrian crossing to reduce confusion, and increase safety for people crossing. This crossing point will be upgraded to a permanent crossing as part of improvements to connectivity on the Eastside in the near future. Exact design of this crossing is to be confirmed. The temporary crossing point will remain in until at least the end of March – the end of the 1 year trial – at which point a decision whether to keep it in until the permanent crossing is installed will be made.