

9 September 2026

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Local Government Official Information Request – SR.114853 – Pedestrian crossing safety audit framework and use of crash data

I refer to your official information request received by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council (Council) on 24 August 2026 where you have requested information pertaining to operational policy frameworks, guidelines and internal directives regarding how Council assesses, audits, and prioritises pedestrian crossing infrastructure.

The answers to your questions are set out below:

1. Integration of Police Crash Data

Please provide copies of the specific policies, frameworks, or operational guidelines detailing how the Council integrates police crash data (such as CAS data) into its pedestrian crossing safety audits. If no such written framework exists, please explicitly confirm that the Council does not have a formal process for cross-referencing crash data when auditing pedestrian infrastructure.

Council does not have a formal auditing programme for reviewing existing pedestrian infrastructure.

Pedestrian crossing infrastructure is reviewed on an 'as required' basis and is generally;

- a) in response to a service request from a member of the community;
- b) through prioritisation of our minor safety programme;
- c) in response to new development; or
- d) delivery of school travel management plans.

Council does not have a specific policy, framework, or operational guideline that prescribes a formal process for integrating Police Crash Analysis System (CAS) data into pedestrian crossing safety audits.

When assessing pedestrian crossings, footpaths, and other pedestrian infrastructure, Council takes a case-by-case approach. CAS data may be considered as one of several inputs; however, it is not the sole basis for assessing safety needs or prioritising improvements. It should also be noted that CAS data only records crashes reported to and attended by Police and does not capture all incidents or safety concerns.

We apply NZTA guidance including the current Pedestrian Network Guidance and Safe System Road Safety Auditing procedures to assist with decision making on infrastructure assessments. These documents provide guidance rather than prescriptive requirements, and professional engineering judgement is applied when assessing individual locations.

The need for new footpaths, pedestrian facilities, or upgrades is determined through site-specific assessments that may consider factors such as pedestrian demand, connectivity, safety concerns, surrounding land use, community needs, strategic priorities, and available funding.

Within our district, funding for many pedestrian projects is provided through the relevant Community Board. While Engineers assess and identify needs at specific locations, funding and project prioritisation decisions are determined through Council and Community Board processes.

For new developments, pedestrian infrastructure is assessed through the development review process. Proposals are reviewed by the Transportation Team to ensure that footpaths and related infrastructure comply with the applicable requirements of the Western Bay of Plenty District Council Development Code and other relevant standards. For formal crossings and significant new developments, we may require that a Safe System Road Safety Audit be undertaken.

References:

- [NZTA pedestrian-network-guidance](#)
- [WBOPDC the-development-code](#)
- [Safe system audit guidelines: Safe System auditing procedures for transport projects - Road to Zero edition](#)

2. Geographic Scope (Main Roads vs. Suburbs)

Please provide any policy documents or risk-assessment frameworks that dictate how crossing safety audits are distributed geographically. Specifically, does the Council have a systematic framework for evaluating pedestrian infrastructure inside suburban and residential areas, or are proactive safety audits restricted primarily to main arterial roads? If no policy exists for suburban areas, please explicitly state this.

Council does not have a separate policy specifically governing proactive pedestrian crossing safety audits within suburban or residential areas on existing infrastructure.

Assessments are undertaken based on identified needs, safety concerns, project requirements, available funding, and network priorities rather than road classification alone.

References:

- [NZTA safe-system-audits](#)
- [Western Bay of Plenty District Plan](#)
- [WBOPDC the-development-code](#)

3. Asset Scope (Formal vs. Informal Crossings)

Please provide the engineering criteria or internal guidelines used to determine which types of crossings are actively safety-audited. Does the Council's audit framework include informal pedestrian crossings (such as courtesy crossings, dropped kerbs, and school walking routes), or is it restricted strictly to formal infrastructure (such as zebra crossings and raised traffic tables)? If informal crossings are excluded from standard audit frameworks, please provide the directive confirming this exclusion.

Both formal and informal existing crossing facilities may be considered for an assessment. The level of assessment will vary depending on the site, the nature of the concern, and any identified safety risks.

Council does not have a specific engineering criteria that limits safety assessments or audits to particular types of pedestrian crossings. Formal crossings (such as zebra crossings, raised tables, and signalised crossings) and informal crossing facilities may both be considered as part of a safety assessment, depending on the nature of the concern, project, or location being reviewed.

Informal crossing facilities are not excluded from safety assessment. When reviewing pedestrian infrastructure, Council considers the overall function, safety, and connectivity of the pedestrian network rather than assessing individual crossing points in isolation.

Where an informal crossing location is identified as requiring improvement, the need for an upgrade to a formal crossing facility is assessed based on specific site conditions. Considerations may include vehicle operating speeds, traffic volumes, pedestrian activity, safety risks, surrounding land uses, and relevant engineering standards and guidance. Depending on the nature and scale of the proposal, public consultation may also form part of the decision-making process.

4. Future Corrective Actions

Please provide any documented proposals, meeting minutes, or directives from the last 18 months indicating whether the Council intends to amend its future pedestrian safety audit processes to systematically include suburban or informal crossings.

Council does not have any proposals, meeting minutes, directives, or approved work programmes from the last 18 months that propose amendments to pedestrian safety audit processes specifically to systematically include suburban or informal crossings.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at freephone 0800 802 602 or at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Ngā mihi



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