

# Holy Family School

## Research Report

### Follow up Parent Travel Survey – September 2012

## A. INTRODUCTION

### Background

Holy Family School has been implementing a school travel plan since 2010 and is one of five travel planning schools working in partnership with Queenstown Lakes District Council. The main goal of the programme is to increase safe travel choices for children and with the help of the school community, address road safety issues where possible. Holy Family School is part of a geographical 'cluster' of educational facilities and is working jointly with Wanaka Primary School.

A key part of the school's travel plan is to carry out travel surveys. This document summarises the results of the school's follow up parent survey which was run in September 2012, following on from the first parent survey which was completed in July 2010. Classroom data is also collected by the school once a year to provide quantitative information on students' travel modes and preferences.

This follow up parent survey report presents data from the survey which shows travel choice, barriers and opportunities around active transport, use of the school bus service and changes in travel behaviour between 2010 and 2012. This information was collected through paper and web-based questionnaires.

### The Road Environment, Infrastructure and Community Road Safety

Other nearby educational facilities includes Wanaka Primary School, Mt Aspiring College and the Montessori Early Education Centre are all within 1 km radius of Holy Family School. The school is bordered by Aubrey Road, Rata Street and Kirimoko Crescent. All roads have a 50km/h speed limit.

A range of infrastructure measures were implemented by Council to aid safe walking and access routes in response to the relocation of Wanaka Primary School in the nearby area. Some of these measures had a positive impact on safe routes to school for Holy Family students as well, such as:

- Upgrading of Aubrey Road shared pathway
- Installation of shared pathway along Beacon Point Rd and some of Aubrey Rd to connect to Holy Family
- Pedestrian crossing points, kerb build outs and/or traffic islands such as on Aubrey Rd outside HFW, on the intersection of Anderson and Aubrey, on Kings Drive and Ironside, two on Anderson Rd itself and pedestrian/speed calming ramps on Totara Terrace.
- Active school signs were installed around the geographical cluster, including for Holy Family School and are activated at school commuter times (approaches of Aubrey Rd, Kings Dr and Plantation Rd).
- Sealed footpath down Rata Street and along Aubrey Rd to connect to Holy Family School

Educational and community initiatives have also been implemented since 2010 to support safe walking, biking and bussing to school. Many of these have been run jointly with Wanaka Primary

such as; cycle skills courses and competitions, Walk n Wheel events, developing safe route and parking maps, coordination of the Mt Iron walking school bus, road safety quizzes and the installation of rural bus shelters in partnership with Total Span's Undercover Kids program.

## **Road Safety – Crash Statistics**

The recorded crashes in the Mt Iron and Wanaka Town Centre areas between 2005 and 2012 that involved a pedestrian, cyclist or school bus were reviewed. It was found that during school weeks and during school travel times (7am-10am and 2pm – 5pm) there were 4 minor injury crashes involving school aged pedestrians or cyclists.

Between 2008 and 2012 there has been no crashes involving a school bus. A more in depth analysis was run to identify the number of crashes involving a cyclist or a pedestrian.

More detailed information about crash data is available through Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) or New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and can be investigated by the working group if this is needed at a later time.

## **What the Survey Data Will Tell Us**

The purpose of this survey is to give an overview of student travel patterns while the purpose of school travel planning is to encourage and facilitate active and safer travel choices. By analysing travel choices and the reasons for these choices, QLDC can monitor issues and safety concerns to improve the roading network to better serve the school and the surrounding community. The survey acts as a forum for parents to discuss any roading concerns with Council. All submissions and suggestions will be considered in school travel and network engineering action planning.

## **Participation Rates and Promotion of Survey**

A total of 29 surveys were received. With a roll of 85 families this represents a response rate of 35% of the school's population. This compares with a 53% response rate for the 2010 survey. The most recent survey shows a poor response rate. This may limit the quality of the data summarised in this report and may be less accurate in reflecting the views of the whole school community.

To promote the survey, posters were given to the school, a press release was done and spot prizes provided by *New World*. Parent newsletters and a classroom competition also helped encourage parents to respond (by rewarding the class with the highest number of returned surveys).

In this report, the research data is summarised in the following way:

- Section A: Introduction and background information
- Section B: Travel Results (travel choice, changes in travel, walking, cycling, bussing and carpooling)
- Section C: Parents' Comments
- Section D: Summary and Opportunities
- Appendix 1 and 2 (Travel mode maps)

## B. TRAVEL SURVEY RESULTS

**Note:** The total number of parents in this survey (totalling 29 out of a possible 85 families) equates to a 35% response rate. This report only reflects the views of those who took part in the survey.

### 1. PARENTS' RESPONSES - 2010 AND 2012 TRAVEL SURVEYS:

Parents were asked if they took part in the school's first survey run in September 2010:

- Around one third said "yes"
- Around two thirds said "no", of these parents it is not known how many answered "no" because they had no children attending the school in 2010, or how many didn't take part.

### 2. CURRENT TRAVEL CHOICES – 2012:

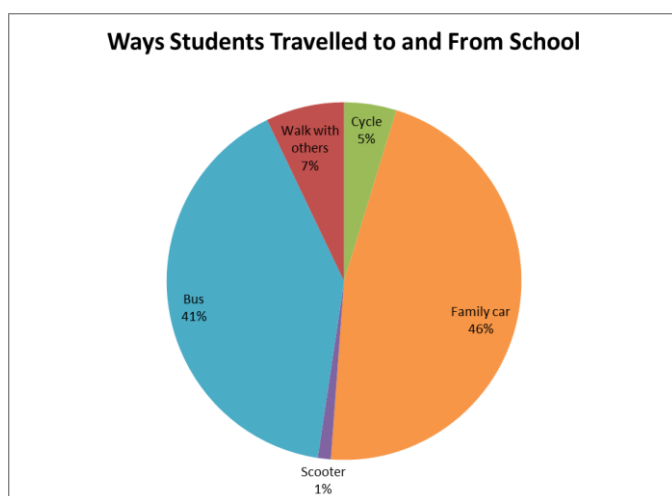


Figure 1: Comparison of **MAIN MODES** of transport 2012

Parents were asked what their children's main mode of transport was to and from school.

Just under half of respondents used the family car and 41% the bus as a main mode of transport. Some walked with others (7%) or cycled (5%), with 1% using a scooter. None reported coming to school in a friend's car or walking alone.

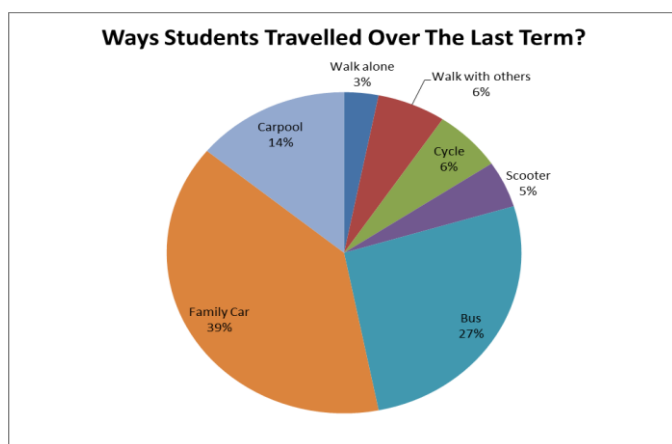


Figure 2 : Comparison of **ALL MODES** of transport – Term 3, 2012

Parents were asked to identify *all* the transport modes their children used in term 3. When looked at in this way over a period of time, it was found that slightly higher numbers of children bike, scooter or walk.

The numbers of children choosing to car pool is significantly higher increasing from 0% to 14%, with less children using the school bus and the family car.

### 3. Distance Travelled By Mode

Appendix 1a and 1b (see page 10-11) shows transport modes based on where students live. The colour of the road defines how far away students live from the school. This is useful in helping to understand how distance from school dictates transport choice. As would be expected, most of those who walk cycle or scooter to school live within 1km of the school, whilst those who travel by bus or car live more than 1km from the school. The maps show that all students who live outside the 1km radius of the school either travel by car or school bus.

#### 4. Changes in Travel Behaviour:

Parents were asked whether the ways their child/ren travelled to school had changed since the first survey (taken in September 2010).

For those parents who completed the survey in September 2010, a third said their travel mode had changed and two thirds said it had not.

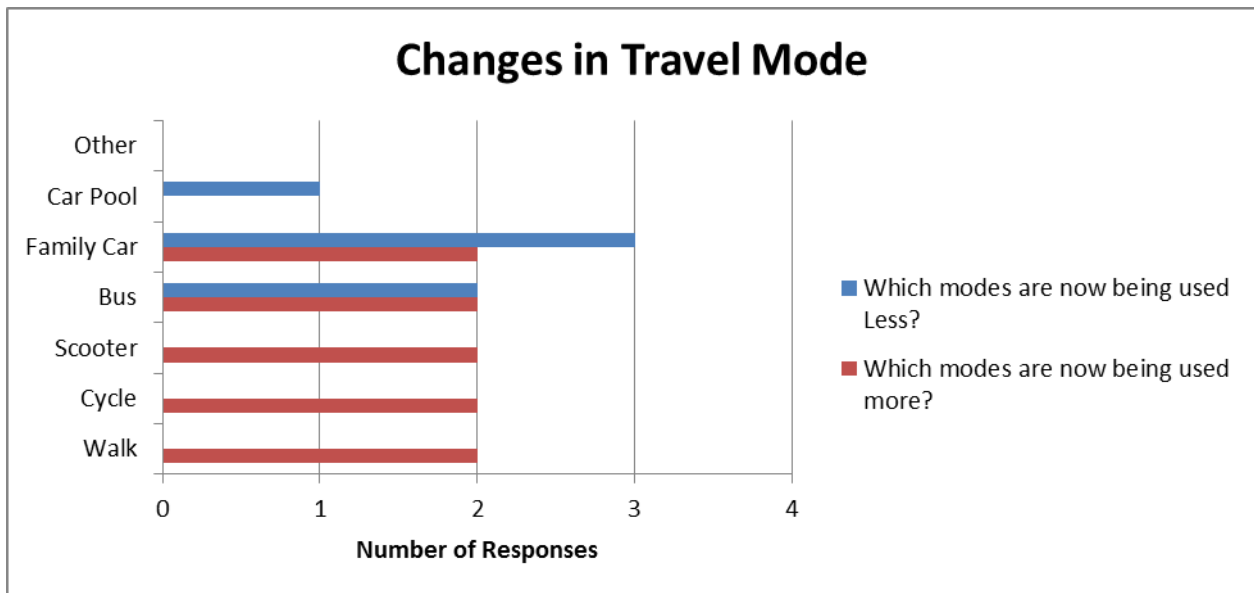


Figure 3: Changes in Travel Modes

Figure 3 shows that overall; there has been a decrease in the use of the family car and carpooling. School bus use seems to stay the same with a marked increase in active travel choices (scooter, cycling and walking).

Table 1: Actual Changes in Travel Modes

For those whose travel choices had changed, the modes being used *more* or less were:

	Walking	Scooter	Biking	Family Car	Bus	Car pool
Modes used more	2	2	2	2	2	0
Modes used less	0	0	0	3	2	1

## 5. Driving to School

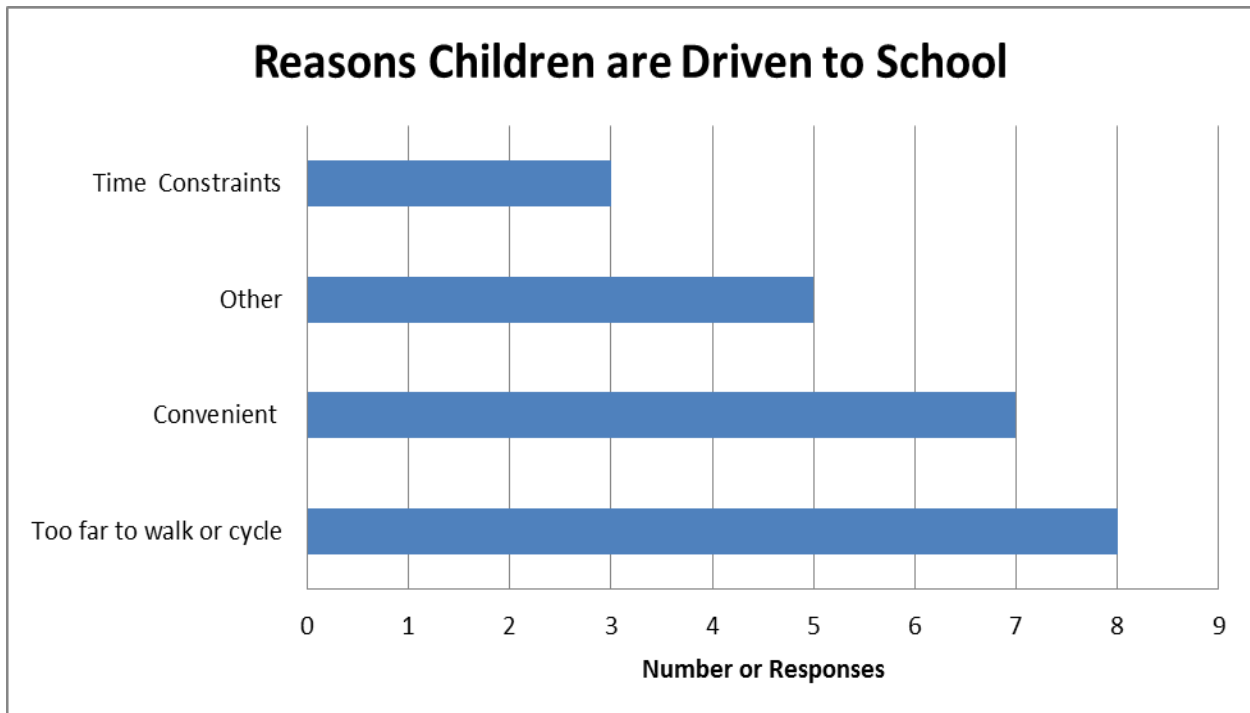


Figure 4: Main reasons for driving to school

Parents were asked what the two main reasons were for driving children to school. Convenience and distance were the main factors when choosing to drive. The travel plan work will aim to reduce concerns about personal safety and address road safety issues to make modes other than driving more attractive.

## 6. Walking to School

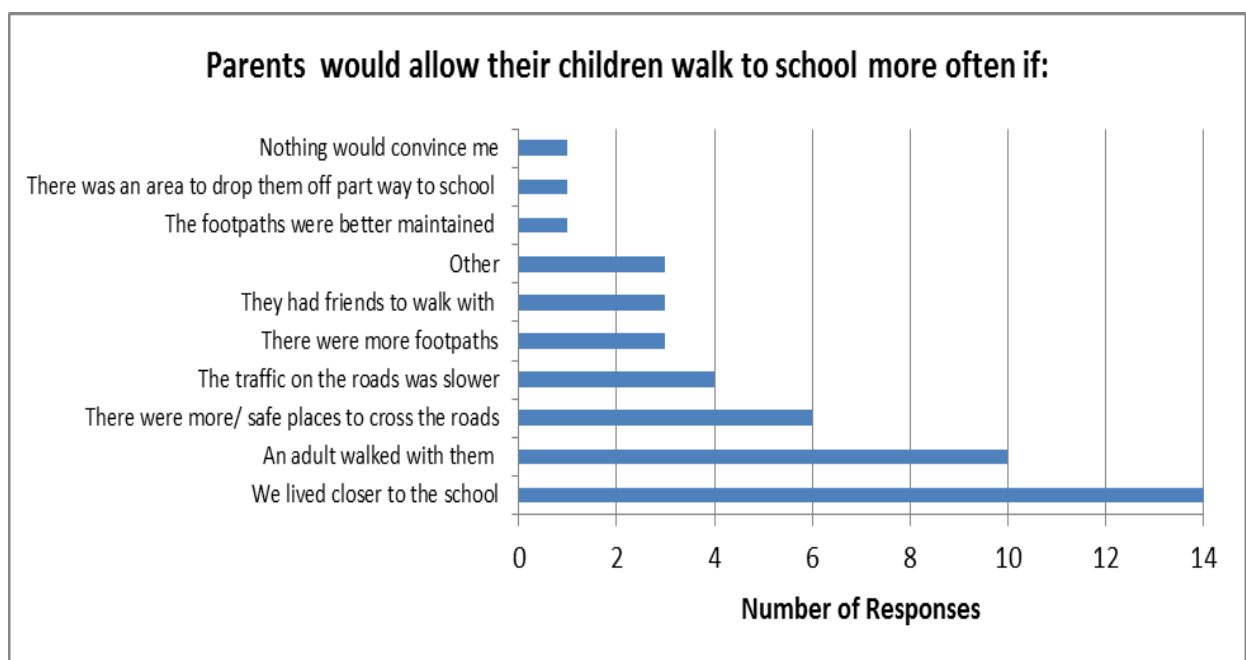
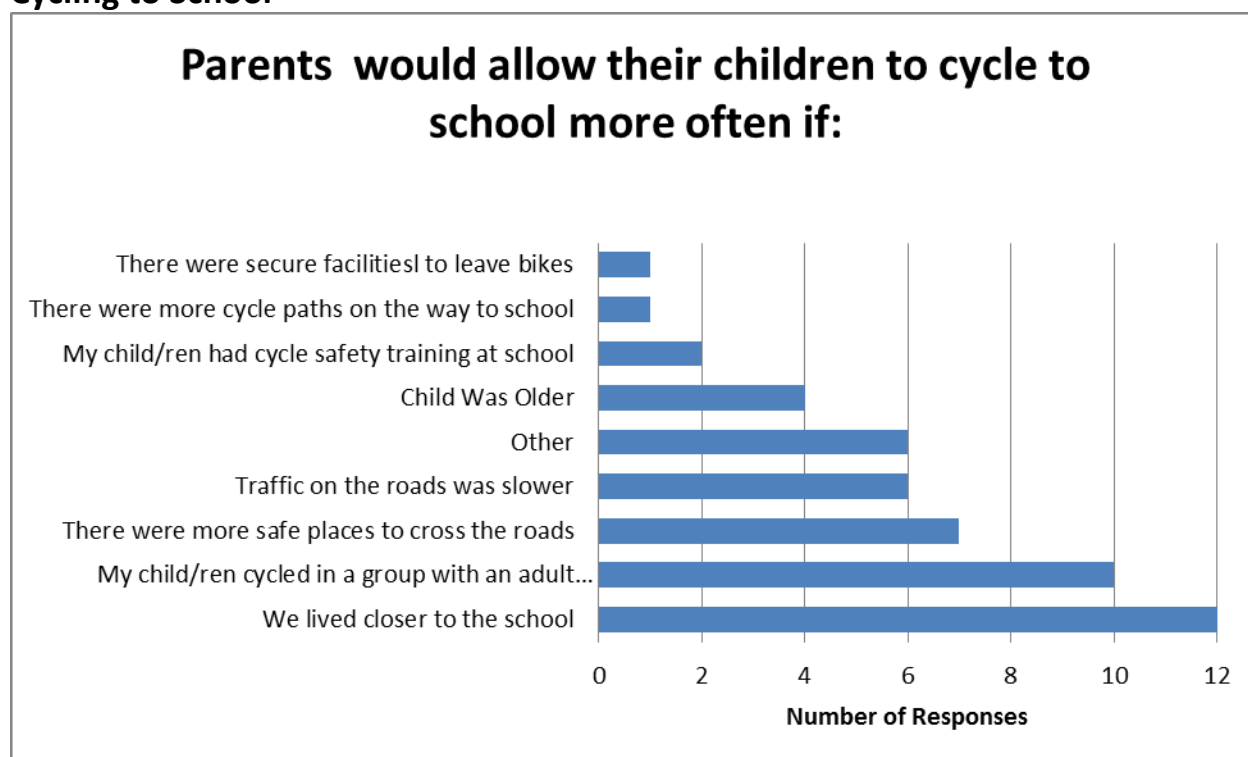


Figure 5: Factors to Get Children Walking More

Parents whose children did not usually walk to school were asked what would allow them to walk more often. Figure 5 shows the number of responses, (up to 3 reasons could be chosen). Living closer to the school was by far the leading factor influencing walking choice, followed by the need for an adult to walk with the children. Safety and infrastructure provisions were also important.

Other reasons that would allow their children to walk to school more often included: walking during warmer months, walking if a walking school bus went directly to Holy Family School, rather than stopping at Wanaka Primary, and the age of their child.

## 7. Cycling to School



**Figure 6: Factors to Get Children Cycling More**

Parents whose children did not usually bike to school were asked what would allow them to bike more often. Figure 6 shows the number of responses (up to 3 reasons could be chosen).

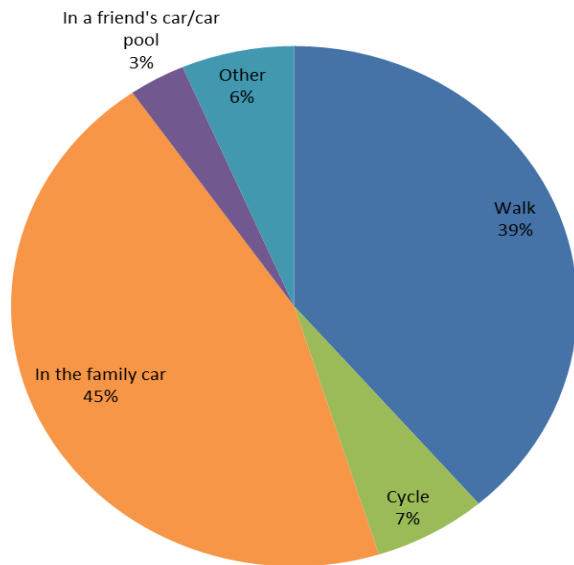
Similar to the results in the walking question, the most important factor affecting parents' decisions to let their children bike was living too far away from the school. The second most important factor was the need for an adult to cycle with children. Safe places to cross roads, and the speed of traffic were also important factors.

Other reasons for not wanting their children to cycle included the need to have less gear to carry and for children's skills to be improved.

## 8. Bussing to School:

Around **30%** of families stated that they were not eligible to use the bus service; the **actual** number of those not eligible could be higher. The most common reason for not being eligible is living outside the required area to qualify for access (the Ministry of Education requires families live a least 3.2kms away from the school).

Parents were asked why children were not using the bus service even though they are eligible to use it. There were only 3 responses to this question, 1 answer each was recorded for the need for more bus stops, improvements in bus safety and concerns of child being bullied.

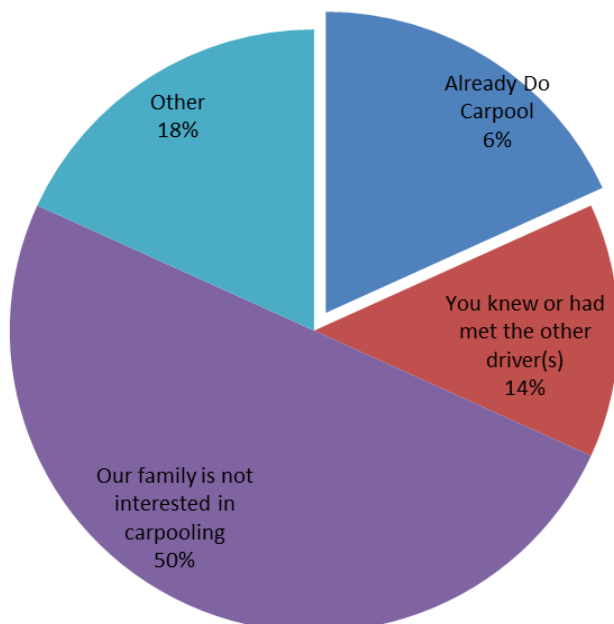


**Figure 7: Travel Modes to and from the bus stop**

Figure 7 shows parents' travel modes to the bus stop over morning and afternoon journeys. Generally there was no significant difference between mode choice in the morning and afternoon, except:

- More children were driven in a friends car from the bus stop in the afternoon (6%) compared with none being driven to the bus stop in a friend's car in the morning.

## 9. Carpooling to School:



**Figure 8: Reasons to carpool**

When asked about carpooling, only 6% of parents already carpool, half are not interested, 14% would carpool if they knew or had met the other drivers.

A total of 18% selected 'other' reasons for not carpooling which included; circumstances, space in the vehicle, after school activities and the need for child restraints.

## C. PARENTS' COMMENTS:

Below is a list of parents' comments (arranged into themes) in response to the question 'Do you have any comments about your child/ren's journey to and from school?'

Issue or Theme	No of times mentioned
<b>BUS:</b>	
behaviour on School bus (bad language/bullying)	4
'overcrowding' on bus	2
length of bus journey (to Hawea, Hawea via Meadowstone)	2
<b>SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL</b>	
<b>Speed:</b>	
School buses with 20km/h sign, needs more awareness	3
want 80 turned into a 50 km/h area (rural), would encourage cycling	1
Speed - support 40km/h during school times around schools	1
<b>Crossing points:</b>	
More pedestrian (zebra) crossings (outside school on Aubrey)	2
Want 'manned' crossing points	2
Crossing Pt at Rata/Hunter	1
<b>Footpaths/shared paths:</b>	
Footpaths (especially Rata, Hunter, Aubrey)	1
More cycle lanes	1
wider footpaths	1

## **C. OPPORTUNITIES:**

### **Travel Choice and Distance from the School:**

Being a special character school, Holy Family School's catchment is dispersed over a large geographical area. Not surprisingly, there are high numbers of families who either drive or bus their children to school, limiting the travel choices of walking, biking or scootering to school.

### **School Bus Service:**

Again, because of its special character, Holy Family School children are eligible to use the bus service even when they live a long distance away from the school. This can present challenges for younger children who have less endurance for longer bus journeys. Sharing the bus with older students can be a concern for some parents (Holy Family School students share the bus with students from all schools including those from Mt Aspiring College). Some parents are reluctant to have their children on the same bus as older students as they believe they are more likely to be subjected to inappropriate language and behaviour.

Some parents are also unhappy about what they view as 'overcrowding' on buses, have concerns when students have to stand, and would prefer it was mandatory to wear seat belts. Currently the Ministry of Education's criteria around maximum passenger numbers allows for students to stand and there are no legal requirements to supply seatbelts. Changes to legislation and increased funding is required to provide these safety measures and the Ministry of Education has not indicated this would change in the near future.

As in 2012, the length and routes of some bus journeys was also questioned in the 2010 travel survey. At the time, these concerns were followed up at a school meeting and discussed with the school bus contractor who explained their rationale for these decisions. Ideas such as parents providing their own mini bus service and coordinating car pooling from Lake Hawea were explored, but not pursued further because they were not viable at the time. Parents' comments relating to school bus use from the 2012 survey will be forwarded to the bus contractor.

### **Safety and Infrastructure:**

Parents say that slower speeds and more crossing points are important factors to encourage safe walking, cycling and school bus transport. Some want to see more awareness of the 20km/h speed limit past a stationary school bus (eg via flashing lights on backs of buses). However one parent living in a rural area noted that drivers tended to comply well with this law.

Having crossing points monitored or providing a pedestrian ("zebra") crossing outside the school were measures favoured by some parents. Since the survey was implemented, Council did carry out a comprehensive campaign to recruit volunteers to monitor crossing points. However there was not enough interest from the community to allow this project to be implemented.

Other measures put in place since the survey was undertaken include;

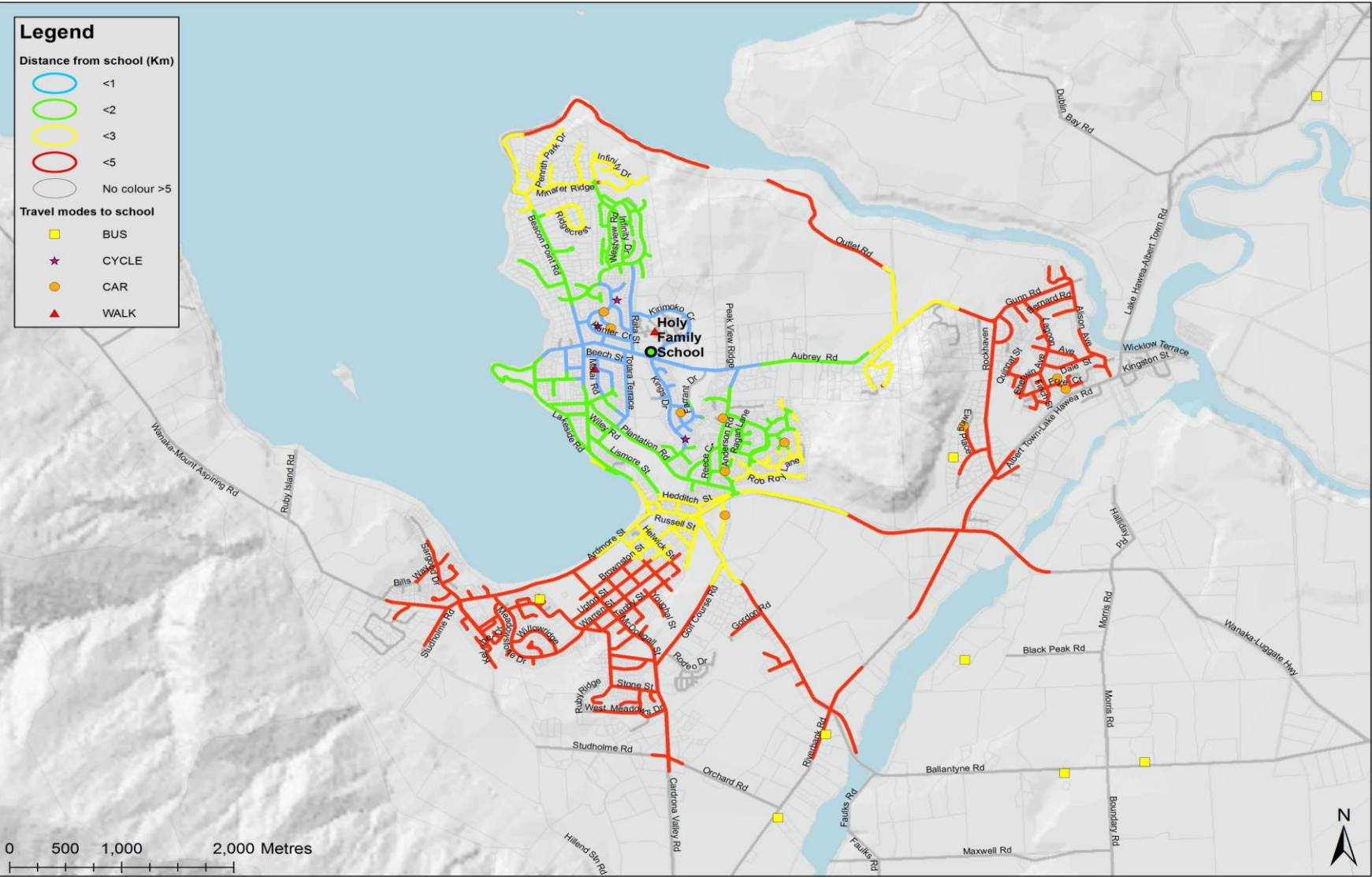
- Installation of a footpath along Rata and Aubrey Streets to connect to Holy Family School.
- Greater interest in the Mt Iron walking bus. This has resulted in an alternative walking bus route connecting directly to Holy Family School (rather than via Wanaka Primary).

### **Next Steps:**

- The travel survey report will be discussed with the School and the main findings can be made available to parents.
- A working group meeting to develop an action plan addressing concerns and opportunities may be carried out later in the year and any parents will be welcome to attend.
- Council will consider any potential infrastructure measures or actions in future work programmes where relevant.

# APPENDIX 1a: Travel Mode Map to School Close Up

See end of p3 for background information



## APPENDIX 1b: Travel Mode Map to School – Overview

See end of p3 for background information

