

5. CHESTER STREET PEDESTRIAN MALL

Officer responsible City Street Manager	Author Peter Atkinson DDI 371 1611
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The purpose of this report is to consider the submissions of Mrs A Wilson to uplift the part time pedestrian mall designation on that section of Chester Street between Park Terrace and Cramner Square.

BACKGROUND

Chester Street is a local access of some 150 metres in length. The Cathedral Grammar School occupies all but one of the properties along the street. This is a private school for both boys and girls and who can attend pre school classes, junior school (year 1 to 4) and prep school (years 4 to 8) classes. The school presently has a roll of 381 pupils and is being planned to hold a maximum of 403.

The street is a local street in terms of its use, character and location. The majority of motorists using the street are motorists associated with the school. There are a high numbers of pedestrians crossing the street, most of which are associated with the school.

The members of the School Board originally petitioned the Community Board in December 1999. An initial concern of the Community Board was the impact on the immediate neighbours. Before the application could proceed the School was required to consult with these residents. This was carried out by members of the School Board who visited residents and advised of no conflict. After the Board considered various reports, it recommended to the Council the implementation of a pedestrian mall over the section of Chester Street west outside the school. Following 'special order' process, the Council confirmed the resolution in September 2000 to create the pedestrian mall. There were no objections as part of this process and the only concerns (known to the Council) has been since the physical introduction of the pedestrian mall.

The concerns of Mrs Wilson and her neighbour are understood to relate to the use of the street by the school, the extra distance when driving to and from her property, which is located on Park Terrace and the conflict with children playing in the street when passing through as a pedestrian.

COMMENT

The original intention of the pedestrian mall was to avoid pedestrian/vehicle conflict, particularly during the school period. The pedestrian mall has successfully achieved this. The success of the pedestrian mall needs to be balanced with the inconvenience to local residents. The pedestrian mall does not limit pedestrian movement along the street and therefore, the only disadvantage to residents is the extra vehicle distance travelled. This would represent only an extra 6% in distance (in the worst situation) to an average vehicle trip, which is typically some 5.9 kms in length.

The street furniture, which has been added to the street as part of the introduction of the pedestrian mall, has been carried out in an appropriate manner that enhances the appearance of the street. The street is now part of a city walking tour and the pedestrian mall is a unique feature along the walking route.

CONCLUSION

The pedestrian mall provides an ideal solution to an unusual situation where a school is situated on both sides of a local road and immediate residents can still use the road for most of their normal activities. It has been done in a manner that reflects the special character of this unique area.

Recommendation: That the pedestrian mall in this section of Chester Street remain

Chairperson's Recommendation: That the recommendation be adopted.