

14. TOWER JUNCTION DEVELOPMENT ROADING IMPROVEMENTS

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the results of consultation concerning roading improvements detailed in an earlier report received by the Board on 4 June 2003. The Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee will also be considering this report.

BACKGROUND

Details of the major features of the Tower Junction development traffic management scheme were included in the 4 June 2003 report and plan. The proposed consultation process was also outlined in the earlier report, and indicated that this "should initially be on of information sharing with an emphasis on engaging established business in a dialogue about changes that may affect their existing access and service facilities.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

In the previous report it was emphasised that because the opening date for the Tower Junction Development is in November 2003; the timeframe for consultation, the letting of contracts, and the completion of construction were on a tight critical path.

Consultation commenced on 10 June 2003, and was based on the circulation of three publicity leaflets. The leaflets included the overall plan, detailed roading designs and a summary of the main features.

In some cases personal contact with affected business owners was made, and dialogue was possible on a one to one basis. This also resulted in a better understanding of issues. Written responses to the schemes were also encouraged, and these have all had a formal reply.

In many instances the issues raised are current problems or frustrations being faced by the commuters or businesses but it was felt that the impending establishment of Tower Junction would exacerbate these issues. However the dominant concerns were symptomatic of the growth of traffic on major roads resulting in queuing and delays.

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Clarence Street/Whiteleigh Avenue

No Stopping Controls

These are proposed on both sides of the roadway between Blenheim Road and the railway to enable the implementation of the additional traffic lane and cycle lanes. This is an extension over the existing no stopping associated with the Blenheim Road intersection. Some casual and commuter parking was observed on the balance of the roadway. The consultation has determined a requirement to preserve on street parking for some businesses. As most businesses have off-street parking available, the loss of kerbside parking should not seriously disadvantage these businesses.

A specific requirement for the business on the corner of Princess Street has been met with the provision of an indented parking bay. A meeting was held with the business operators of a flower market on O'Shannese Drive, who hold an auction 3 mornings per week. There is insufficient kerbside parking available in O'Shannese Drive at these times for their customers and they also park in Whiteleigh Avenue. Unfortunately it is not practicable to retain kerbside parking in the adjacent section of Whiteleigh Avenue.

Cycle Lane Marking

The intention of the scheme is to mark cycle lanes between Blenheim Road and the railway. Recent discussions has determined that the laning arrangement between Princess Street and Blenheim Road needs further investigation. It has therefore been decided to stop the northbound cycle lane at Princess Street in the interim, until a detailed investigation can be carried out to determine the optimum arrangement for traffic lanes and cycle facilities at the Blenheim Road intersection.

Property Access

Access to and from businesses can be difficult during peak periods when queuing traffic is encountered. Several businesses have requested the provision of cross hatched "keep clear" areas. This treatment is normally only implemented across railway lines or adjacent to emergency vehicle driveways. Our experience is that such facilities should not be provided at intersections, because of safety concerns involving cyclists and motorcyclists.

Princess Street

Access Difficulties

This street is used by employees of major manufacturing industries, suppliers, and customers. Users of Princess Street are also able to exit or enter via Dalgety Street directly onto Blenheim Road or Matipo Street. However, feedback from the community identified a strong desire to be able to turn right into Whiteleigh Avenue at peak times.

The installation of traffic signals was suggested as an option for facilitating this manoeuvre. However, this option is not currently within the scope of the project.

It is anticipated that the additional southbound traffic lane from Blenheim Road to Troup Drive will clear traffic quicker and the traffic signals at Troup Drive will provide a break in the traffic to assist vehicles turning out of Princess Street. The flush median at the Princess Street will be widened to 3 m to cater for truck turning manoeuvres.

Heavy Vehicle Route

Princess Street is used extensively by heavy vehicles servicing the manufacturing sites in the street and also accessing the Translink depot in Matipo Street. These vehicles require extra roadway space at the intersections. The installation of broken yellow "no stopping" lines on Princess Street at Clarence Street and minor carriageway widening at Matipo Street is proposed. These changes should mean that large trucks will also be able to turn without moving over the centreline or the adjacent kerb.

Safety Concerns

It was suggested that the existing safety record of the Princess Street/Clarence Street intersection was poor and that the proposed changes would compound the safety issues. The LTSA crash statistics for the period 1994 to 2003 have been examined and show 8 recorded crashes resulting in 6 minor injuries for this 10 year period. It is concluded that this intersection has a relatively good safety record. It is expected that changes proposed with the installation of parking controls and the indented parking bay will improve visibility. The wider flush median on Whiteleigh Avenue will also provide a better refuge for vehicles preparing to merge with the Clarence Street traffic. City Streets is confident that safety will be improved with the proposed changes in traffic management.

Troup Drive

Troup Drive is one of three access points to Tower Junction and the railway station. Main features detailed in the publicity leaflet included:

- 2 lane access onto Whiteleigh Avenue
- 1 lane entry off Whiteleigh Avenue
- Roundabout at Clarence Street south
- Traffic signals at Whiteleigh Avenue
- No stopping controls on both sides

Initial consultation has seen acceptance of the first four features as being fundamental to the project. However the installation of the broken yellow "no stopping" lines on Troup Drive has met with opposition from Glass Tech who occupy an adjacent business premises. The nature of their business is that heavy vehicle access is a requirement, and it has been their standard practice to make extensive use of Troup Drive for parking and manoeuvring.

The traffic plan circulated for this road was developed to ensure that safe, efficient egress to and from Tower Junction was possible. It was important to ensure that the signal controlled intersection and roundabout worked efficiently to minimise the delays for all traffic. Because Glass Tech objected to the loss of parking on Troup Drive the detailed design for the road has been reworked. Because it is possible to widen the road, a flush median, wider traffic lanes and kerbside parking adjacent to Glass Tech frontage can be provided. "No stopping" would still apply on the south side. It is anticipated that with these changes the traffic carrying function of the road will not be compromised and safe heavy vehicle access to Glass Tech will continue to be available.

Blenheim Road (Clarence to Mandeville Streets)

Previous consultation on the implementation of the cycle lanes and the removal of car parking on both sides of Blenheim Road between Clarence and Mandeville Streets was completed two years ago. The work was not proceeded with because of the uncertainty of the Blenheim Road Deviation.

Because of this very little response was received from this area.

Lowe/Tyne/Pope/Anderson Street Area

An initial meeting was held on the 10th June with a representative group of business owners from this area and the following changes were implemented to the layout plans to satisfy the requests of this group.

- No stopping to be implemented on both sides of Lowe Street for the full length.
- Temporary off street parking will be constructed by Ngai Tahu Properties Ltd in the berm area on the west side of Lowe Street to satisfy local parking.
- At the intersection of the temporary access from Lowe Street and the new entranceway into the Tower Junction development separate left and right turning lanes will be provided with sufficient length to allow for the queuing of vehicles.

(Note: this intersection will be monitored once the Tower Junction development is in operation and if the delays to the Lowe Street traffic are unreasonable, temporary traffic signals will be installed at a cost to Ngai Tahu Properties Ltd.)

The amended plans were circulated to all property and business owners in the area for comment and very few responses were received.

Foster Street

Broken yellow "No Stopping" lines are to be installed along the north side of Foster Street between Clarence and Picton Avenue.

The businesses that front onto this section of road were visited and all agreed that they had adequate car parking available off street.

CONCLUSIONS

Details of the proposal were circulated to businesses located within the area shown on the plan, and to all businesses in O'Shannese Drive and Princess Street. In some cases meetings and discussions were also held. Feedback from the latter two streets has been significant.

The loss of kerbside parking on Whiteleigh Avenue and Clarence Street was raised, and existing access difficulties onto these streets was identified. However during discussion with businesses these matters have been addressed.

Kerbside parking cannot be retained but minor improvements are being provided to help vehicles turning out of Princess Street. The provision of a cycle lane on Clarence Street from Princess Street to Blenheim Road will be subject to further investigation.

Glass Tech raised concerns over the proposal to ban parking on both sides of Troup Drive and the design has subsequently been changed to provide parking adjacent to their property.

Feedback from businesses in the balance of the area has established that their specific requirements have been met and there is now good acceptance of the plans.

The STU Committee will consider various recommendations for the Tower Junction Development Traffic Management Plan relating to the establishment of kerbside parking bans and traffic control devices. The Board's support for the plan is sought.

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
 2. That the Board support the Tower Junction Development Traffic Management Plan.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:** That the officer's recommendation be adopted.