4. HIGHSTED ROAD – PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Officer responsible	**Author**
City Streets Manager	Michael Thomson, DDI 941-8950

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Advise the Board of the community concern about the safety of Cotswold School children who need to cross Highsted Road.
2. Advise the Board of traffic management works to address this concern.
3. Seek the Board's endorsement of the scheme and Board approval to initiate public consultation.

BACKGROUND

Parents of Cotswold School have raised concerns about the safety of their children, needing to cross Highsted Road when walking/cycling to and from school. A 53 signature petition regarding this has been received. While the main frontage to Cotswold School is on Cotswold Avenue, the school does have access onto Martbern Crescent. From this entrance, children walk along Martbern Crescent, Cardome Street, Highsted Road and Drysdale Street. Children and their parents, wishing to walk from Cardome Street to Drysdale Street, have to cross Highsted Road (see **attached** plan). The average daily volume of Highsted Road is 7,600 vehicles. During the afternoon crossing time, the average arrival rate of vehicles was surveyed at one vehicle every 10 seconds. This short gap selection decision for children is problematic. While no formal speed surveys have been carried out, the onsite observation that vehicle operating speeds appear high, is not surprising considering that the road section, between the roundabouts at Harewood and Sawyers Arms Roads, is 820 metres, combined with a straight streetscape. The number of Cotswold School children crossing Highsted Road was counted at 30. In addition to this number, children from other schools cycled or walked on, or across, the roadway at this location.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Any changes to traffic management, to improve the situation for one road user type, should not compromise the safety and convenience for any other road user. There are a number of pedestrian road crossing facilities, but these are warranted based on usage, streetscape disruption and costs.

Examples of these are:

1. **Traffic Signals**
   The national guideline states that signals are warranted when there is at least 400 pedestrians crossing per hour.

2. **Zebra Crossing**
   The Christchurch accident database from the Land Transport Safety Authority reveals that zebra crossings on busy roads, combined with low or intermittent pedestrian use results in an unacceptably high casualty rate for pedestrians. A zebra pedestrian crossing installation cost is approximately $40,000 with kerb extensions.

3. **Grade Separated (Overpass/Underpass)**
   These facilities result in significant impact on the adjoining residential amenity, due to the ramp and bridge structures. The extra deviation, up or down to these facilities results in a number of people not using them. The cost of a grade separated facility is approximately $300 - $400,000.

4. **School Patrol (kea crossing type**)
   This type of facility can be ideal in this type of road environment. Due to the remote location from the school, it is not practical for children to carry the required equipment (swing out signs and flags) to this location, twice a day.

RECOMMENDED OPTION

The **attached** plan refers. This option involves a flush (painted) median along Highsted Road, terminating just beyond each side road junction. Central pedestrian islands are located just to the south of Cardome Street and just to the north of Drysdale Street. A parking restriction would be required along the length of this median treatment.

The objectives achieved with this facility are:

1. Pedestrians who currently cross, from the south side of Cardome Street, to the north side of Drysdale Street, will be catered for (note: pedestrians crossing between the islands benefit from 2 metre wide painted median, and the channelisation of traffic around the islands).

2. Cyclists benefit who are right turning into/out of either Cardome Street or Drysdale Street from the central painted median.

3. Right turning traffic at these streets also benefit from the median. Note: a similar project in another part of town has eliminated the collisions that were occurring due to the vehicles crashing into stationary, queuing right turners.

4. Traffic speeds are calmed where a flush median and islands exist.

5. Cyclists benefit, when travelling along Highsted Road.

6. Pedestrians are encouraged to cross at the islands which are located at positions which optimises visibility of pedestrians, to motorists turning out of the side streets.

7. Similar traffic management facilities installed at other locations have an excellent safety record, in regard to pedestrian safety.

8. The City Streets Unit has a budget provision for this project.

9. The school community is supportive to improve safety. (A petition is currently being circulated at the school.)

The disadvantages of this proposal are:

1. Loss of kerbside parking between, and adjacent to, the two intersections.

2. Minor effect on right turns into four driveway entrances.

CONCLUSION

The safety of children crossing this busy road is of concern. The loss of kerbside parking is offset, to some extent, by the available kerbside parking on the immediately adjacent side roads. The recommended proposal maximises objectives for road safety at these junctions.

Staff Recommendations:

1. That the Board approves this proposed traffic management plan on Highsted Road.

2. That the Board approves distribution of a publicity leaflet, detailing this proposal to the community.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the above recommendations be adopted.