

<b>Officer responsible</b> City Streets Manager	<b>Author</b> Geoff English, Lighting Asset Engineer
Corporate Plan Output: Underground Wiring 9.5 text 59	

The purpose of this report is to consider the possible underground conversion of services in Idris Road between Glandovey Road and Wairakei Road.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Idris Road is identified for kerb and channel renewal during the 1998/99 financial year between Jeffreys Road and Wairakei Road on the west side and Glandovey Road and Wairakei Road on the east side. This project begins where the recent conversion of Glandovey Road terminated.

The Council usually pays the major cost of underground conversion in projects of this nature. Southpower acknowledges an internal benefit by providing a contribution of approximately 18% of the cost to convert their services. The Council usually pays the full cost to convert Telecom's services unless it is an area where they see a major benefit in having their services underground. The Council also pays the full cost of conversion of the street lighting. Taking into account the above, the cost to the Council for an underground conversion project is approximately \$450,000 per kilometre of road.

Southpower also has a conversion programme that looks at converting areas where it is necessary for network reinforcement reasons. For these projects the Council would pay for the conversion of Telecom and street lighting.

The Environmental Policy and Planning Unit also funds some conversion projects as part of their enhancement programme.

#### **PRESENT POLICIES**

The City Streets underground conversion policy for allocating funds is to underground:

- roads in conjunction with major road works where road widening requires the existing poles to be relocated,
- major traffic routes, particularly entrances/exits to the city,
- major tourist routes.

Generally priority is given to Southpower conversion projects (where the Council only pays for Telecom and street lighting) and road works projects on hierarchical roads where the existing poles need relocating as part of the project because the cost of pole relocation is saved.

The present funding levels have not made it possible to underground all hierarchical roads in conjunction with road works.

## ISSUES

The budget allocation for City Streets undergrounding as shown in the 1998 Annual Plan (page 27) is as follows:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Operational</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1998/99</b>		882,000	882,000
<b>1999/2000</b>	500,000	100,113	600,113
<b>2000/01</b>	1,500,000	1,162,800	2,662,800
<b>2001/02</b>	1,500,000	594,168	2,094,168
<b>2002/03</b>	1,500,000	1,162,800	2,662,800

There are insufficient funds for the next two years (1998/99 and 1999/00) to allow undergrounding of all hierarchical roads in conjunction with the kerb and channel renewal programme. This year, priority has been given to projects that require relocation of the existing reticulation poles due to changes in road alignment, as this is the most economic option.

Idris Road is a minor arterial and the section between Glandovey Road and Wairakei Road is programmed for kerb and channel renewal this financial year. The estimated cost to convert this section of road is \$260,000. As the existing poles do not need relocating as part of the kerb and channel renewal project it is not programmed for underground conversion.

The next section of Idris Road (between Wairakei and Blighs Roads) is currently programmed for kerb and channel renewal in 2002/03. Based on the current method of prioritisation and the budget shown in the 1998 Annual Plan for undergrounding during 2002/03 it is likely that this section would be undergrounded in conjunction with the kerb and channel renewal. This may raise concerns with the residents if one section is undergrounded and the other section is not. It would also appear as if different prioritisation criteria are being applied, where the problem is actually due to large changes in budget allocation.

Other roads on the 1998/99 kerb and channel renewal programme that will not be undergrounded are:

- Avonside Drive – Kerrs Road to Wainoni Road (Collector)
- Estuary Road – Beattie Street to Bridge Street (Collector)
- Westminster Street – Cranford Street to Thames Street (Collector)

These are all collector roads whereas Idris Road is a minor arterial.

## OPTIONS

1. Do nothing and let the programme continue as presently programmed.

2. Delay the kerb and channel renewal of Idris Road between Glandovey Road and Wairakei Road until 1999/00 and smooth the underground conversion budget allocation over the next four years.
3. Delay the kerb and channel renewal of Idris Road between Glandovey Road and Wairakei Road until 2000/01 until the undergrounding budget increases to allow the conversion of this project. If this option is implemented it will not address the smoothing of the budget allocation and similar problems will occur with other projects in 1999/00.

There may also be the option of considering the funding of the undergrounding through the forthcoming six month review. If this becomes possible, the kerb and channel renewal work would still need to be delayed until 1999/00.

#### **SUMMARY**

The underground conversion budget allowance for 1998/99 and 1999/00 is insufficient to allow undergrounding of all hierarchical roads in conjunction with the kerb and channel renewal programme. This has meant that Idris Road between Glandovey and Wairakei Roads, which is a minor arterial, cannot be undergrounded as part of the proposed kerb and channel renewal project. This will be highlighted in 2002/03 when the remaining section of Idris Road is due for kerb and channel renewal and the larger budget will probably allow undergrounding of this section.

It would be desirable to underground both sections and there is an opportunity to achieve this through consideration of the 1999/00 budget.

**Recommendation:** That option 2 be adopted and consideration be given during the budget process to smoothing the undergrounding programme over the next four years.