

6. CENTRAL CITY TRAFFIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

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The purpose of this report is to outline to the Council matters for consideration in relation to a recommendation of the Joint CCC/CRC Committee meeting of 18 July 2001, which is:

“It be recommended to the Environment Committee that an environmental impact study be carried out as soon as possible on the effects of all traffic movements in Colombo Street and Rolleston Avenue.”

An environmental impact study in this context could cover the following matters:

- Noise
- Air quality for a range of measures
- Water runoff quality
- Vibration
- Severance
- Heritage and built environment impacts

It is anticipated that the intention of the recommendation is to assess the above issues and identify key adverse effects, and perhaps recommend solutions for the short term.

Traffic movements on these streets include private cars, taxis, cycles, urban bus services, tourist vehicles, service vehicles and emergency vehicles.

There is no explicit allowance in the current transport planning budget to conduct this study. There is also limited expertise in the Council to provide detailed expert advice on some of these matters; this would have to be commissioned from external sources. To provide quality advice and information on these issues, on-site measurements will be required. Such external advice and investigation from consultants would cost of the order of \$15,000 to \$20,000 for a limited assessment and could be an order of magnitude higher for an in-depth assessment. This work would need to be funded by way of substitution.

However, such an isolated study of this nature would only give a limited picture, independent of other transport issues in the rest of the central city. Without considering the bigger picture of the central city, very few options (short- or long-term) would be available to address any key adverse effects, notwithstanding the very limited range available for Colombo Street in any case. The value of doing this work independently of a more integrated approach incorporating the other streets in the central city must be considered.

As part of the central city revitalisation project, a central city transport plan is being formulated. This will provide an integrated plan both geographically and across modes within the four avenues, including the area covered by the above recommendation. Short and long term projects will be proposed. It could consider as part of its development, detailed environmental impacts as listed above. Incorporating the work associated with the above recommendation into the wider central city transport study, to provide a more integrated response to any environmental impacts is a preferred process.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the recommendation from the Joint CCC/Environment Canterbury Committee meeting of 18 July 2001 be forwarded to the Central City Transport Study Team Leader for inclusion in the study brief for the Central City Transport Study.
 2. That air quality concerns be referred to Environment Canterbury for an urgent air pollution study of Rolleston Avenue and Colombo Street.
 3. That the environmental impact study be reported back to the Environment Committee within six months.
 4. That short-term solutions are pursued to mitigate the environmental concerns in the sensitive areas of Rolleston Avenue and Colombo Street.