

4. BEALEY AVENUE/FITZGERALD AVENUE/WHITMORE STREET INTERSECTION

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of the results of the consultation on this project and to seek approval to proceed with the design, construction and remarking of this intersection.

BACKGROUND

Bealey Avenue and Fitzgerald Avenue are both major roads forming part of an extended ring road system to bypass the city centre. Bealey Avenue currently carries around 22,300 vehicles per day and Fitzgerald Avenue carries around 21,500 vehicles per day.

Together with Whitmore Street they also link the north and eastern parts of the city with the Christchurch Business District. Whitmore Street is a minor arterial route while London Street is a local road. Whitmore Street carries around 21,600 vehicles per day.

The proposal is to remark the lanes at the intersection to include cycle lanes and dedicate right turn lanes from Whitmore Street and alter the phasing of the traffic signals to improve safety and capacity.

A publicity leaflet was distributed with a letter to the residents and the owners of properties who are most affected by the proposed loss of parking owing to the lane changes at the intersection. Other properties in the immediate area received a copy of the publicity leaflet. A plan of the proposal is attached.

DISCUSSION

Fifteen replies were received to the publicity plan, including three telephone calls. The main issues raised were the loss of parking, exiting of London Street, and right turning at the intersection. All have received a reply.

The amount of 'no stopping' has been reduced to a minimum in Fitzgerald Avenue and results from having to reduce the number of lanes in Fitzgerald Avenue from Cambridge Terrace to Bealey Avenue to provide cycle facilities. To keep the capacity through the intersection the third (left turning) lane has been reintroduced from No's 271/273.

The reduction in parking in Whitmore Street is to enable the two right turn lanes to be marked. There is a need for the two right turn lanes to keep the capacity at the intersection with the dedicated right turn phase. The dedicated right turn phase will be a short phase but with two lanes the number of vehicles turning will not be reduced. If the phase is lengthened the cycle time for the intersection is lengthened and this is a time delay for all vehicles.

Unlike the other approach roads to the intersection, London Street is a local road. The narrowing at the London Street intersection indicates to motorists that they are entering a different traffic environment. If the entrance was widened and a left and right turning lane was marked, then more traffic would use London Street as a short cut, which is an issue that would not be acceptable to the Richmond Community.

Several replies requested that the dedicated right turn arrow also apply to traffic turning east from Fitzgerald Avenue into London Street. This is part of the dedicated right turn phase for Whitmore Street, so the requests are being met. There will not be a right turn (filter) on the straight through green as at present. The turning traffic will be held with a red arrow.

CONCLUSION

As the concerns raised in the replies to the publicity can be addressed, approval is sought to proceed with the final design plans and construction. For the work to progress there is also a need for alterations to be made to the parking restrictions on the approach roads to the intersection and these restrictions have been resolved by the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board. The Community Board has given its support to the project subject to further consultation as per recommendation No 2 below.

Recommendation:

1. That the Bealey Avenue/Fitzgerald Avenue/Whitmore Street intersection project proceed to design and construction.
2. That council officers be requested to consult further with John Rhind Ltd, the two businesses situated at 302 and 304 Fitzgerald Avenue and the Richmond Neighbour Cottage Residents Group with a view to minimising the loss of parking consistent with the integrity of the plan.