

13. MARY STREET/MAIN NORTH ROAD

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the results of the consultation relating to the proposal to make Mary Street “exit only” at the Main North Road intersection. If the Board supports the proposal a recommendation from the Board through the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee to Council to restrict a portion of Mary Street to “one way” traffic at the Main North Road intersection, would be required.

BACKGROUND

As part of their main submission on the overall Papanui Cluster Living Streets concept the East Papanui Residents Association suggested that Mary Street become “exit only” at the Main North Road intersection (see attached plan). This suggestion stems from the fact that Mary Street, due to the signalised intersection at Main North Road, carries a disproportionate amount of traffic (2850 veh/day) compared to any of the other intersecting side roads leading into the cluster from Main North and Papanui Roads eg. Grants Road 1215 veh/day. Turning right out of any of the non-signalised intersections along Main North Road and Papanui Road is difficult and seldom attempted, therefore the signals at Mary Street/Main North Road tends to attract vehicles to Mary Street as the outlet for anyone within the cluster wishing to travel north. While this is accepted, there is really no reason why Mary Street should be the preferred street for access into the cluster.

This concept was reported to the February 2004 meeting of this Board where it was decided that *“thorough consultation be undertaken and that emergency services in particular be consulted”*

CONSULTATION

A letter and accompanying plan was distributed to residents in an area bounded by Proctor Street, Grants Road, Papanui Road and Main North Road. After concerns were expressed that this area of

consultation was too small, the area was increased to include those residents bounded by Sawyers Arms Road, Morrison Avenue, Ellery, Wilmot, Harewood Road and Main North Roads.

Fifty-seven submissions were received in favour of the proposal and thirty-three opposed with four neither in support or opposition. This represents a 10% return rate which is quite typical. Extending the consultation area yielded 9 submissions of which 8 support the proposal. The submissions in opposition are generally concerned with convenience issues for residents. This needs to be weighed against the reduced traffic volume in Mary Street, which will improve the residential amenity in the street and redistribute traffic throughout the other local roads in the area more evenly. The majority of submitters are willing to accept a minor inconvenience in accessibility although many are not willing to make such a sacrifice and are concerned about the migration of traffic onto the streets that they live on.

As requested emergency services have been consulted. Papanui Police station support the proposal, St Albans Fire Station (first response) and St John Ambulance have no objection.

DISCUSSION

Vehicle access into the cluster ideally should be shared amongst all the side streets that share the same “local” road status. Making Mary Street exit only would reduce the volume of through traffic encouraging motorists to enter via other side streets. Approximately 800 vehicles on average per day enter Mary Street from Main North Road, while approximately 2050 exit on average per day. Mary Street has the same “local” road status as Loftus, Horner, Wyndham, Frank and Grants Roads, yet carries nearly twice the volume of traffic carried by Grants Road (1200), and probably 4 times that of the others eg. Frank Street (500 est.). The proposal seeks to go a small way to address this disparity through the re-distribution of the 800 or so vehicles a day entering Mary Street. This concept has been discussed with City Streets traffic and signals engineers and there is agreement that there would be no disadvantages to the network as a result of making Mary Street exit only. Similarly there would be no significant advantages either. However, increasing the number of exiting lanes will reduce perceived confusion and is perceived to improve the level of safety and congestion as reported by some residents.

Mary Street would continue to serve an important function as the outlet for the 2000 or so vehicles exiting the cluster and this should be retained. There are a number of other factors that will, to a degree, help reduce the volume of traffic using Mary Street. These include; the intention to ban right turns into Grants Road from Papanui Road, the traffic calming proposed throughout the area as part of the Papanui Cluster Living Streets kerb and channel renewal and the changes to right turn give way rules that are likely to come into effect this year (traffic wanting to turn right from Mary Street into Main North Road will be required to give way to traffic turning left out of Langdons Road onto Main North Road, currently vice versa.) These measures will reduce both the attractiveness and effectiveness of Mary Street as a short cut and will have an impact on the amount of traffic exiting Mary Street.

CONCLUSION

The issue is finely balanced. There are no quantifiable benefits to the road network in terms of efficiency or safety as a result of the proposal. The benefits relate to improved residential amenity for Mary Street residents by virtue of reduced traffic achieved through a more even spread or redistribution of traffic volume through the area. Many residents understand and accept this argument including many from streets other than Mary Street itself. Equally there are many that are not willing to sacrifice the current level of accessibility into the area. It is generally accepted that Mary Street, due to the traffic signals located at the Main North Road intersection, fulfils an important function for traffic exiting the area and will always attract vehicles to it. The proposal is an attempt to reclaim some of the loss of residential amenity suffered by the amount of through traffic. However, irrespective of the future of this particular proposal, it is anticipated that the volume of traffic using Mary Street will decline or have it's growth significantly reduced through the other measures detailed.

Staff

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
 2. That should the Board support the proposal a favourable recommendation to Council through the STU Committee would be required. That recommendation would read; that;

The Council resolve to amend the Christchurch City Traffic and Parking Bylaw 1991 in the following manner:

1. That the Fifth Schedule be amended by inserting the paragraph:

“39. *Mary Street in a north westerly direction 26 metres from the intersection of Main North Road.*”

Chairperson's

- Recommendation:** That the Board decline the residents request at this stage and that staff prepare a report to come back to the Shirley/Papanui Community Board in 2006 when the majority of the Living Street project is completed.