

13. THORRINGTON ROAD/WHERSTEAD ROAD/WOODBRIDGE ROAD – STREET RENEWAL POST CONSTRUCTION REPORT

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to address the issues raised in a petition to the Board in August 2004 regarding the Cashmere Road/Thorrington Road intersection following the street renewal works in Thorrington, Wherstead and Woodbridge Roads. The Board's approval is being sought that no further work be done in these roads.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. In November 2003, street renewal works commenced in Thorrington Road, Woodbridge Road and Wherstead Road. The works took approximately eight months to construct (see attached) and was completed in July 2004.
3. The original objectives for the project were to:
 - Replace the existing kerbs and deep channels with kerb and flat channel.
 - Minimise traffic taking a short cut through Thorrington Road.
 - Slow traffic in the neighbourhood.
 - Improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
 - Provide improved pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities.
 - Provide suitable parking to meet the needs of the residents.
 - Retain existing street trees and enhance the streetscape.
 - Upgrade any inadequate street lighting.
 - Complete a project that would satisfy the needs of the asset unit and the community.
4. The completed project has achieved all of these objectives.
5. In August 2004, the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board received a petition from some residents in the above streets concerning the traffic management control at the intersection of Cashmere/Thorrington Roads. As a consequence of this petition, and also because of some concerns the Board had regarding traffic management in Colombo Street, Dyers Pass Road and Cashmere Road, the Board requested a comprehensive report of traffic issues in the wider area with consideration being given to establishing an area traffic management plan. This report only deals with the issues raised in the petition. The wider traffic management study is being prioritised along with other traffic management investigations and will be completed in due course.
6. The Council engaged Montgomery Watson Harza (M.W.H.) Ltd to carry out an investigation on the issues raised in the petition. This involved a survey of the residents in the area and measurements of traffic volume and speed in Thorrington Road. The investigation found that traffic speeds and volumes in Thorrington Road have been significantly reduced, and 76% of those people surveyed are satisfied or very satisfied with the completed works.
7. It is concluded from the investigation that no further work is necessary, however, it is recommended that the narrowing in Thorrington Road be monitored for safety performance and future action be taken if necessary.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. There are no financial considerations.
9. There are no legal considerations.

BACKGROUND ON THORRINGTON ROAD/WHERSTEAD ROAD/WOODBRIDGE ROAD – STREET RENEWAL POST CONSTRUCTION REPORT

10. When the street renewal project for these streets was started a community survey was carried out to obtain residents and property owners concerns and issues that might be addressed with the work, prior to any planning being done. The survey results (attached) indicated that the residents would like to see the number of vehicles, using Thorrington Road as a shortcut, reduced. A publicity pamphlet and plan (attached) was distributed showing how this was to be achieved. Some residents were against the proposed narrowing round the bend in Thorrington Road and the exit only from Thorrington to Cashmere Roads (see attached). To address these issues a public meeting was held which resolved that the narrowing around the bend and the exit only feature in Thorrington Road would be included in the construction plan.
11. Following the reconstruction of the Thorrington Road/Cashmere Road intersection a petition was presented in August 2004 to the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board. The petition requested a reassessment of the closure of the left-hand turn from Cashmere Road in to Thorrington Road. The Community Board received the petition and requested a comprehensive report to investigate this issue, including wider traffic issues affecting the area; with consideration being given to the establishment of a traffic management plan.
12. With regard to the issue raised in the petition, Montgomery Watson Harza (M.W.H.) Ltd were engaged to evaluate the consultation process and affect on the local community of the works. This involved the following:
 - (a) Evaluating local perception of the affects of the kerb and channel and traffic management works in Thorrington Road, Wherstead Road and Woodbridge Road implemented in 2003/2004. Local residents of the three streets were given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and their responses analysed to assess the affect the works have had on their streets. Parents collecting/dropping off their children for school in Woodbridge Road were also given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire to assess the effect that the works have had on their trip planning.
 - (b) Evaluating the effectiveness of the traffic management in the Thorrington Road/Woodbridge Road/Wherstead Road area. The effect of traffic restraints on vehicle volumes and speeds in Thorrington Road has been assessed along with the other aims of the project as set out in the project objectives.

SURVEY FINDINGS

13. The survey and investigations conclude:
 - (a) The two main contentious issues were the narrowing in Thorrington Road and the intersection layouts and movement restrictions at Thorrington Road/Cashmere Road. Results from the door-to-door survey have proved that the new intersection layout at Cashmere Road/Thorrington Road, despite being an inconvenience for a high proportion of residents, has been acceptable as most of the rat-running traffic has been removed from the local area. There is no recorded crash history post implementation of the scheme, suggesting that there is no immediate safety issue with these two features. However, monitoring of the site should be undertaken and a full review carried out after three years post construction to ensure that no safety issue arises from the new scheme layout. At present, there is no reason to amend the scheme implemented. In general, residents' opinion of the speed of traffic in the area is that it has reduced. This is supported by evidence from speed surveys undertaken as part of the post construction survey. However, a small number of drivers were still travelling at excessive speeds. This issue needs to be monitored, raised with the local Police and enforced accordingly. The landscaping of the scheme came across as an important issue for residents and is clearly a valued amenity in the area. A small number of residents have experienced some drainage issues since the installation of the scheme and in some cases drainage has worsened. The two properties concerned will be investigated. In places, residents have observed road surface deterioration and looseness of material. The consultation process over the whole project has been very well received by the majority of residents. Future consultation processes could benefit from providing residents with more detailed information on the speaking process at meetings as some residents were unaware of this.

- (b) From the traffic volume survey, it is clear that there has been a remarkable decrease in the volume of traffic using Thorrington Road, approximately 65% reduction of an average of 637 vehicles per day. The speed count survey also shows a pleasing reduction in mean speed from just under 45 km/h to just under 40 km/h. Still of concern are the high end speeds (although infrequent) and this will need to be related to the Police so that targeted enforcement can be programmed. Enforcement should also be carried out at the Thorrington Road/Cashmere Road intersection where a few drivers are showing disregard to the new intersection layout. With respect to all three elements (traffic volume, speed and safety) it can be said that the project has been very successful. Generally, all the objectives set out in the Capital Works Project Terms of Reference have been fully satisfied.

CONCLUSIONS

- 14. As a result of these survey findings, it is to be concluded that the project goals and the goals of the residents have been largely satisfied. It is therefore recommended that no further action be taken in this area, other than monitoring and Police enforcement actions as indicated. Of course, options exist to rework the Cashmere/Thorrington Roads intersection. However, given the success of the work thus far, it is not recommended. Any changes to the intersection would need to have a specific purpose (e.g. to permit greater access to Thorrington Road) and would need to be considered in the light of their consequential effects (i.e. more vehicles using Thorrington Road). Any further work here would need to be prioritised against other similar work in the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (a) No changes to the road layout in Thorrington, Wherstead, or Woodbridge Roads be undertaken.
- (b) The narrowing at the bend in Thorrington Road (as shown in the attachment to this report) is monitored for the next three years and any significant issues that arise be investigated and reported to the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendations be supported. Also, that the petitioners be advised of the investigations and decisions.