

#### 4. BALCAIRN STREET – SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager, City Environment, DDI 941-8656
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Don Munro, Transport & City Streets Manager
<b>Author:</b>	Kirsty Ferguson, Consultation Leader

##### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Board to proceed to final design, tender and construction of safety improvements to Balcairn Street in the vicinity of the intersections with Brenda Place and Revell Street.

##### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. This project has been initiated through the Safe Routes to School programme at Oaklands School, due to road safety concerns for children crossing Balcairn Street, near its intersection with Revell Street, on their way to and from school. Oaklands School requested the Council to investigate and implement an improved crossing point for pedestrians, particularly school children and their parents, on Balcairn Street.
3. The principal aim of the project is to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety when crossing Balcairn Street to access the Brenda Place entrance to Oaklands School.
4. The preferred option includes kerb extensions at the intersection of Balcairn Street and Brenda Place, which narrow the carriageway to 6.0 metres between kerbs. Crossing points at Balcairn Street and at Brenda Place are proposed between the kerb extensions. The benefits of these kerb extensions include:
  - A smaller kerb radius at the intersection will reduce vehicle turning speeds;
  - A narrower carriageway will reduce vehicle speeds;
  - A shorter crossing distance between kerbs will improve safety for pedestrians; and
  - Defined crossing points will improve pedestrian safety.
5. The road narrowings are designed to provide an opportunity for some landscaping as well as helping to reduce vehicle speed.
6. Other facets of the project that were open for feedback from the community included parking options within the road reserve, the design of the pedestrian facilities, vehicle access ways and landscaping plans.
7. The owners and occupiers of Brenda Place and Balcairn Street were consulted via an on-site door-to-door issues identification survey in June 2005. This was followed up with a publicity pamphlet requesting feedback on the proposal, which was delivered to owners and occupiers, with a copy posted on the "Have Your Say" section of the Council's website in October/November 2005. There were four responses received in total, which were all in support of the safety improvement concept, but had comments or suggestions regarding the design of various aspects of the preferred option. Oaklands School had no specific comment to make on the preferred option.
8. The preferred option, shown in the Plan attached as **Attachment 1** to this report, meets the objectives of the project, which are to:
  - Provide a safe crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists on Balcairn Street, near Brenda Place and Revell Street;
  - Maintain or improve the existing level of service for all modes of transport where practicable;
  - Provide for on-road cyclists at the crossing facility; and
  - Ensure adequate street lighting is provided.

##### FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

9. The safety improvement works at Balcairn Street are programmed in the Transport and City Street Unit's capital programme, for implementation in the 2005/2006 financial year. The cost estimate for this project is \$63,180.
10. There are no legal implications for this project. Community Board resolutions are required to approve the "No Stopping" restrictions.

## BACKGROUND ON BALCAIRN STREET SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

11. Balcairn Street is located within the suburb of Oaklands, which lies in the Riccarton/Wigram Ward. The surrounding area is residential in nature.
12. Balcairn Street is classified as a Local Road in the City Plan. One of the main entrances to Oaklands School connects to Brenda Place via an alleyway at the end of the cul-de-sac. The Land Transport New Zealand Crash Analysis System shows there have been no crashes recorded in this area for the five-year period between 2000 and 2004.
13. A site visit and observation of pedestrian and cycle movements was undertaken on 30 May 2005. An on-site door-to-door survey was carried out with residents in the immediate vicinity of the proposed works on 21 June 2005. No traffic volume or speed surveys have been undertaken due to the specific nature of the project and the narrow window over which the safety issue is concentrated, i.e. the end of the school day.
14. From the concerns raised regarding the safety of pedestrians, and in particular, students and their parents, a preferred option was developed. Further consultation was undertaken via a publicity pamphlet and the "Have Your Say" section of the Council's website with owners and occupiers along Brenda Place and Balcairn Street in October/November 2005.
15. Written and verbal feedback was received from four respondents, which was considered carefully in conjunction with all previous feedback received on the proposed works. This resulted in the development of the final plan, which is shown in **Attachment 1** to this report.
16. None of the four respondents were opposed to the safety improvement aspect of the project; however, they did raise issues in relation to lighting, maintenance of the grass berms, traffic management measures, positioning of trees, parking and signage. A summary of the submissions received and an evaluation of the issues raised is attached in **Attachment 2** to this report.
17. The main feature of the preferred option includes narrowing the road with kerb extensions to six metres width between the kerbs at a "Safe Routes to School" crossing point on Balcairn Street. The road is also narrowed to six metres width at the entrance to Brenda Place with kerb extensions and a reduced corner radius for left turning traffic coming out of Brenda Place.

## OPTIONS

18. Four options were developed for comparison during the concept design process, and were considered alongside the "Do Nothing" option.
19. The "Do Nothing" option was not favoured by the project team, as it does not address the key objective of the project, which is to provide a safer crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists on Balcairn Street.
20. **Option 1** has kerb extensions on Balcairn Street, which narrow the road to six metres width between the kerbs. One kerb extension extends into Brenda Place, reducing the corner radius (and consequently the speed at which motorists may be turning) as well as better defining the area where motorists should not park. This is to ensure that inter-visibility with the new crossing point occurs. The crossing point itself is proposed to be outside number 37 Balcairn Street, which is the location where most of the children have been observed crossing the road. It is sufficiently close to Brenda Place whereby children intending to travel east along Balcairn Street may also use it without the detour becoming too long.
21. **Option 2** is a variation to Option 1, with the proposed crossing point located closer to Brenda Place and utilising the driveway at 35 Balcairn Street. This would reduce the amount of physical work required (e.g. removal of existing kerb and flat channel reduced by approximately 8 metres). The required detour for pupils intending to walk east on Balcairn Street would be avoided, thus increasing the likelihood of those children making use of the crossing point. However, the experience of Transport & City Streets with other "Safe Route to School" projects has been such that the Unit does not support utilising a residential driveway for such a crossing point.

22. **Option 3** envisages a full road closure on Balcairn Street between Revell Street and Brenda Place. A service lane on the existing carriageway would provide access to 36, 37, 38 and 39 Balcairn Street. Driveways for 35, 42 and 44 would need to be constructed as part of the carriageway reconstruction. The crossing point itself would be in an area that is completely free of motorised traffic. It was envisaged to allow cyclists to pass through the road closure, by providing a short link between the proposed service lane and the driveway at 35 Balcairn Street. This option was assessed as likely to significantly exceed the project budget.
23. **Option 4** has kerb extensions on Balcairn Street as detailed in Option 1, but also reduces the corner radius for left turning traffic coming out of Brenda Place. This option has the additional benefit that a "slow point" is created for traffic turning into and out of Brenda Place. The crossing point for pedestrians is also shortened across Brenda Place. Whilst the school is at the cul-de-sac end and pedestrians have a choice of footpath at the end of the road, many school children were observed crossing in this location during site visits.

#### **PREFERRED OPTION**

24. The preferred option is based on Option 4, with some modifications as a result of the feedback received during the consultation phase. This option involves kerb extensions at the intersection of Balcairn Street and Brenda Place, which narrows the carriageway to 6.0 metres between kerbs.
25. The crossing point is located where most children were observed crossing the road.
26. Two new street lights are required, which comprise the installation of two new luminaries on 7.4 metre mounting height section steel lighting poles.
27. The kerb extensions will be grassed and two trees will be planted – one Arizona Ash (northwest kerb extension) and one Callery Pear (northeast kerb extension). The proposed tree will be a 3 metre specimen with no low level branches.
28. Construction is currently programmed to commence in May 2006, and will take approximately three weeks to complete.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS**

##### **The Preferred Option**

29. The objectives for this project are met by the preferred option, in that pedestrian and cyclist safety will be improved when crossing Balcairn Street to access the Brenda Place entrance to Oaklands School. The existing level of service will be maintained or improved. The crossing facility provides for on-road cyclists, and there will be adequate street lighting.
30. This option has the additional benefit of a "slow point" being created for traffic turning into and out of Brenda Place. The crossing point for pedestrians is also shortened across Brenda Street, and whilst the school is at the cul-de-sac end and pedestrians have a choice of footpath at the end of the road, many school children have been observed crossing in this location during site visits.
31. There are no land ownership issues associated with the project, as the works are all contained on Council road reserve.
32. The following consent and legal issues have been considered:
  - Trees – there are no notable or heritage trees shown in the City Plan or on Webmap2 on the Council's intranet
  - Buildings – there are no heritage or historic buildings, places and objects, shown in the City Plan or on Webmap2 on the Council's intranet.
  - Road width – the City Plan, Part 14, Appendix 5, has minimum road widths (i.e. that portion of the road devoted particularly to the use of motor vehicles, inclusive of shoulders and auxiliary lanes) for different road classifications. This scheme has a width of 6.0 metres and the requirement in the City Plan is 9.0 metres. Consent is not required because the section of the road subject to the narrowing is a traffic calming measure and less than 60 metres in length.

### **Maintain the Status Quo**

33. The option to maintain the status quo essentially means to do no capital safety improvement works in Balcairn Street. This would retain the road environment in its existing condition.
34. This option would be inconsistent with the Community Outcomes outlined in the LTCCP, and would be inconsistent with Council strategies, including the pedestrian strategy, road safety strategy and asset management plan.
35. Therefore, it is considered that it would be inappropriate to maintain the status quo because the opportunity to ensure an efficient, safe and sustainable transport system in the City, whilst providing for all modes of transportation, would not be achieved.

### **Alternative Options**

36. The four options developed by the Council are outlined above in paragraphs 18 to 23 of this report. Of these options, Option 1 and 4 met all the objectives of the project; however, Option 4 had the additional benefit of creating a "slow point" for traffic turning in and out of Brenda Place.
37. Option 2 was not considered appropriate as it utilised a residential driveway for the crossing point.
38. Option 3 does not maintain or improve the existing level of service, and this option also significantly exceeded the project budget.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Board:

- (a) Approves the Balcairn Street safety improvement project, as illustrated in **Attachment 1**, to proceed to final design, tender and construction.
- (b) Approves the following parking restrictions:
  - (i) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the south side of Balcairn Street commencing at a point 1 metre west of the property boundary of 33 and 35 Balcairn Street and extending 24 metres in a westerly direction.
  - (ii) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the north side of Balcairn Street commencing at its intersection with Brenda Place and extending 21 metres in a westerly direction.
  - (iii) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the north side of Balcairn Street commencing at its intersection with Brenda Place and extending 10 metres in an easterly direction.
  - (iv) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the west side of Brenda Place commencing at its intersection with Balcairn Street and extending 14 metres in a northerly direction.
  - (v) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the east side of Brenda Place commencing at its intersection with Balcairn Street and extending 13 metres in a northerly direction.