

7. HARAKEKE STREET BRIDGE – SAFETY IMPROVEMENT WORKS

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Transport and City Streets Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Fendalton/Waimairi and Riccarton/Wigram Community Boards approvals to proceed to tender and construction of footpaths on both sides of the Harakeke Street Bridge Safety Improvement Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Avon River is the boundary between the Fendalton/Waimairi and Riccarton/Wigram Community Boards. This report is being considered by both Boards. Harakeke Street is a local road carrying approximately 900 vehicles per day. There have been no collisions on the bridge.
3. A report was made to both Community Boards in April 2004 identifying concerns raised by residents regarding the Harakeke Street Bridge, namely the lack of footpath facilities. The project objectives therefore are:
 - To provide a safe passage for pedestrians across the river
 - To maintain or reduce the speed of vehicles
 - To maintain or reduce the volume of vehicles
4. After investigation into options, a publicity pamphlet was distributed to local residents and interested parties in October 2005 as shown on TP 178001 (attachment 1). Feedback to this plan was 34 in support with 12 against. In general, the project is well supported by the local community.
5. This project received \$10,000 funding from the Community Board. Additional funding is provided by the T&CSU safety improvements programme.
6. The proposed work will provide a new 1.5 metre wide footpath on each side of the bridge while narrowing the carriageway to 3.0 metres to provide one through lane for vehicles.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The cost estimate for this project is \$15,300. The budget for this project is fully provided from the safety improvements programme and the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board.
8. There are no legal considerations associated with this project's preferred option.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

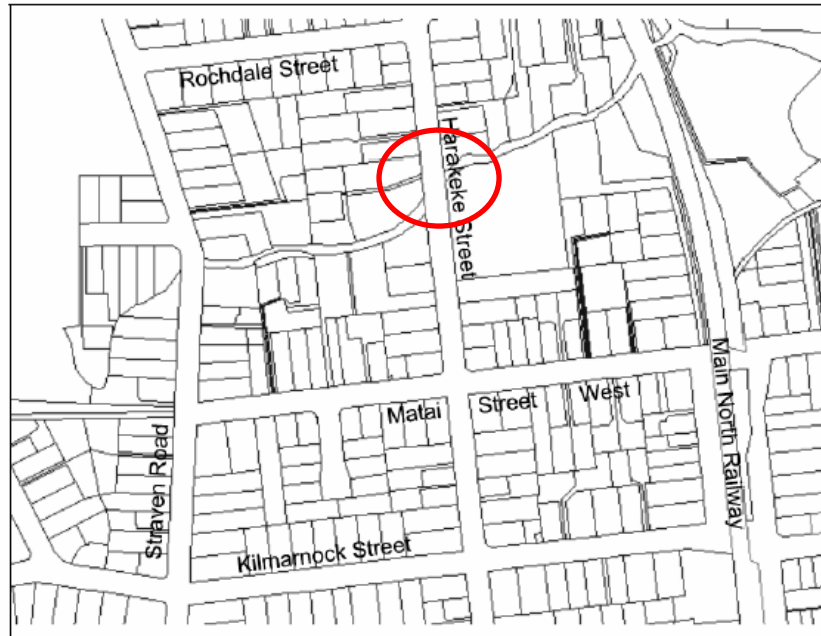
It is recommended that the Fendalton/Waimairi and Riccarton/Wigram Community Boards approve the Harakeke St bridge safety work, in accordance with plan TP178001, for tender and construction.

CHAIRMAN'S RECOMMENDATION

For discussion.

BACKGROUND ON HARAKEKE STREET BRIDGE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

9. Harakeke is a residential street being classified as a 'Local' road in the roading hierarchy for Christchurch City. Harakeke Street has no street trees with older style dished channels. The carriageway width between the kerb and channels is 14.0 metres. The plan below shows Harakeke Street relative to other streets in the area
10. In 2003, local residents raised a concern about the lack of a footpath facility across the narrow Harakeke Street road bridge in the vicinity of the Christchurch Boys' High Adams House Boarding Hostel.



Locality Plan

11. In 2003 and 2004 Harakeke Street was assessed at different times to establish if any other problems exist. Two days of video surveillance was also used for this purpose. The following observations were made:
 - There are numerous cyclists, especially school pupils at school times.
 - Some vehicles tend to use Harakeke Street as a short cut when the traffic queues back from the traffic signals at either Kilmarnock or Matai Streets.
 - In the morning peak (8:00 – 9:00 am) a large proportion of vehicles southbound on Harakeke Street turn left into Matai Street. Most don't stop at the stop control.
 - Adams House students cross Harakeke Street immediately south of the Avon River Bridge in mass taking over the roadway each morning.
 - At present no footpath exists on the Avon River Bridge. Pedestrians must cross the river on the roadway. Some vehicles do not slow for these pedestrians.
12. A concern was raised by residents that empty tour coaches were using the street as a short cut to the newly formed Mona Vale bus park in Mona Vale Avenue. To verify this a video survey was conducted on Thursday 18 March 2004. On the day of the survey two coach buses were observed using Harakeke Street. Anecdotal information advises that there are other days when more buses use Harakeke St.
13. From a road safety perspective, the most significant issue in Harakeke Street is the lack of a footpath facility across the Avon River Bridge, as raised by the residents to the local Community Board. Pedestrians must cross the river on the road bridge mixing with the passing traffic. A pedestrian can feel intimidated by motorists who show little regard for the pedestrian who is crossing the bridge. The bridge is 6.5 metres wide, therefore when two vehicles pass on the bridge little space is left for pedestrians.

14. A proposal was reported to the Riccarton/Wigram and Fendalton/Waimairi Community Boards in April 2004 aimed at addressing concerns raised. The low cost improvement proposed was to create a footpath on the west side of the bridge using kerb blocks to separate vehicles and pedestrians. Under this scheme, the current 6.5 metre width would be reduced to 4 metres and require the installation of a give way control in one direction. Community Board members were supportive of the changes proposed as a basis for consultation with the local community.
15. Project development for this work followed a modified process, aimed at completing the work in as short of a time as possible. The project team subjected the original proposal to critical review, conducted a safety audit and community consultation. The review modified the plan slightly to provide a one-way vehicle section with path delineation on both sides. This is shown in Attachment 1.
16. A consultation leaflet with plan TP 178001(attachment 1) was distributed in October 2005. Feedback to the proposal was is detailed in Attachment 2. Generally, the responses were supportive of the efforts to improve pedestrian safety.
17. Several responses requested a clip-on facility each side of the bridge for pedestrians and speed humps. The clip-ons are unable to be considered at the moment, due to high cost and timeframes required. They may also involve the removal of significant trees. Speed humps are outside the scope of this project but have been noted for consideration when the kerb and dish channel is replaced. The accessibility has also been checked for the entrance to the properties at numbers 75, 75a, 75b, and 75c. This check proved the entrance was readily accessible for 99 percent of vehicles.
18. Initially it was thought appropriate for "One Way Bridge" signs to be erected on the bridge approaches when the footpaths are constructed. Some community responses requested that a Give Way restriction be installed against the south bound traffic, but it was identified by the project team that the north bound traffic would not need to slow down if this was done. To slow traffic in both directions it is therefore recommended that no Give Way signage will be installed. This is consistent with other one-lane treatments throughout Christchurch.
19. It is noted that Harakeke Street (Riccartern Road to Rochdale Street) is included in the current Council 5 Year Capital Expenditure Programme. There is a likelihood that the street will be reconstructed within 3 years. Even so, it is considered appropriate to address the urgent pedestrian safety issue raised by the residents concerning the lack of a footpath on the Avon River Bridge as soon as possible. The low cost of the project will mean minimal write-off, should the bridge configuration be changed as part of the street renewal work.
20. A lighting assessment recommended the upgrade of one light; however, given the kerb and channel renewal that is proposed in the next few years, the street lighting upgrade can wait until then with some minor tree trimming carried out in the interim to reduce shading of the existing street lights.

OPTIONS

21. Three options were assessed for the Harakeke Street Bridge Pedestrian Safety improvement as follows:
 - (a) Maintenance of the status quo
 - (b) Narrowing the carriageway over the bridge and providing a footpath on one side.
 - (c) Narrowing the carriageway over the bridge and providing a footpath on each side
22. The "do nothing" option (a) was not considered appropriate because it did not address what residents perceive as a urgent safety need of a footpath for pedestrians over the existing bridge, nor did it address the project objectives.
23. The option to provide a path on one side (option (b) was the original proposal. It is not recommended because it only provides a path on one side of the bridge – effectively only half a solution to the initial issue. Further, the wider carriageway will not reduce vehicle speeds as effectively as a narrower one.

PREFERRED OPTION

24. The final , recommended plan (option c) consists of the following elements:
 - A footpath is to be constructed on each side of the bridge linking to the existing footpaths.
 - New kerb will be constructed over the bridge defining the limits of and forming a common boundary for the carriageway and footpaths.
 - The existing carriageway will be narrowed from 6.5 metres wide to 3.0 metres wide.

25. This proposal meets all the project objectives in the following manner:
 - Provides a safe passage for pedestrians and cyclists across the river by providing a footpath on each side of the existing bridge out of the vehicle paths.
 - Reduces the speed of vehicles by creating a road narrowing which requires preparation to give way by all drivers.
 - Maintains (and may reduce) the volume of vehicles by limiting the access over the bridge to one direction at a time.

26. The preferred option (refer Attachment 1) has been selected for the following reasons:
 - It best satisfies project aims and objectives from the options considered.
 - It has a good degree of community support.