

2. HAREWOOD ROAD PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE SAFETY

PURPOSE OF SEMINAR

1. The purpose of this seminar is to inform the Board of the outcomes and recommendations of a traffic management study concerning pedestrian and cycle safety on Harewood Road between Sails Street and the railway line (see attachment).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Members will be aware of the concerns that have been expressed by the community regarding pedestrian safety when crossing Harewood Road, particularly in the section west of the railway line. There are a number of elderly persons residing in this area as well as a significant number of school children all with a desire to cross the road to access retail shopping, schools, preschools and churches. Harewood Road is a busy arterial road and currently presents a significant obstacle to pedestrians, particularly in the more vulnerable age groups.
3. The primary focus of the study concerned improving the safety and level of service for pedestrians when crossing Harewood Road. The study also examined the needs of cyclists travelling along this section of road and the integration of improvements that balance the needs of all road users including the consideration of on street car parking demands.
4. Comprehensive video survey analysis was used to gain data concerning the existing road user activity along the road.
5. The survey data shows that there are a consistent number of pedestrians crossing Harewood Road. There are two main desire lines being at the railway crossing and immediately to the west between St James Avenue and the railway crossing. However, there are significant crossing movements within each of the sections surveyed. The traffic volumes on Harewood Road are considerable and it is acknowledged that improved pedestrian facilities are required. The average delay to pedestrians without any facility can be excessive during periods of peak traffic flow.
6. The investigation examined the most appropriate pedestrian facility and was conducted using economic analysis and reference to the draft guidelines for pedestrian facilities. Based on this technical evaluation the most appropriate method of improving the level of safety and service to pedestrians crossing this section of Harewood Road is to install additional pedestrian islands. These would provide a greater sense of safety and security as well as an acceptable average delay to pedestrians given the arterial status of Harewood Road.
7. The current volume of pedestrians crossing the road does not warrant a zebra crossing and overall this option is less economically viable than pedestrian islands. Added to this is the fact that there is no single strong desire line making strategic placement of a zebra crossing difficult which is likely to lead to poor patronage.
8. The community is seeking the safe passage of pedestrians across Harewood Road. This objective is shared by the City Council. On a technical level, pedestrian islands are the preferred facility both in terms of being within the recommended guidelines and producing the greatest road user benefits relative to costs. It is possible that a zebra crossing may be perceived as providing greater benefits by some members of the community. However, there have been no reported crashes involving pedestrians and a zebra crossing is not recommended in terms of the guidelines. Thus any decision to install a zebra crossing to address these perceptions should be balanced against the dis-benefits at a technical and economic level.
9. There is a relatively consistent level of cycle activity along the section of road. Harewood Road forms part of a strategic route into the CBD, local schools, the Papanui commercial centre as well as providing a connection to the railway cycle/pathway. The study identified that dedicated cycle lanes would provide a higher level of safety and service to cyclists in this section of road. The road width required for exclusive cycle lanes needs to be balanced against the available widths required for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The current roadway width is insufficient to meet all demands simultaneously therefore the demands for kerbside parking need to be carefully considered.

10. The video data as well as casual observations show that the greatest demand for kerbside parking occurs on the north side directly outside the "Albarossa Retirement Home" and to a lesser degree opposite outside the "Wesley Home". There is also a minor demand outside the Sanitarium gardens on the north side and on the south side immediately west of the rail crossing outside "The Advertising Club". There is a significant but short-lived demand in the immediate vicinity of the pre-school at 97 Harewood Road but this is typically limited to twice per day and occurs in the morning and evening commuter peak periods. Beyond these areas the evidence suggests that there is very little demand for kerbside parking throughout the day. Generally only 5% of the available kerbside parking space is occupied by vehicles for periods greater than half an hour.
11. The study included the development of a Traffic Management Plan. The recommended plan provides good balance in road uses and involves the strategic placement of pedestrian islands within a painted median and includes exclusive cycle lanes. The painted median is currently only 1.5 metres wide and this can be increased to 2 metres to provide better protection for and storage for pedestrians. The existing island east of Sails Street can be widened.
12. The proposed Traffic Management Plan is attached. Features of the Plan are as follows:
 - (a) Three additional pedestrian islands located:
 - (i) Immediately west of Chapel Street;
 - (ii) Immediately east of Matsons Avenue;
 - (iii) Immediately east of St James Avenue.
 - (b) Widening of the existing pedestrian island east of Sails Street.
 - (c) Two recessed bus bays.
 - (d) The removal of kerbside parking predominantly along the south side of the road but maintaining and/or providing car parking in most instances where there is a recognised demand.
 - (e) A 2 metre wide painted median over the majority of road length.
 - (f) Exclusive cycle lanes over the length of the road section.
13. The retention and widening of the painted median will improve the level of safety for pedestrians (particular those pushing pushchairs or using mobility devices) and provides protected right turns for vehicles turning into the side roads minimising any disruption to the through-traffic stream.
14. The plan reflects a desire to retain as much parking as possible in areas with a proven demand. The proposed lane configuration allows for an increase in the number of parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of the pre-school.
15. The proposal provides a careful balance in the uses of road space, will meet the requirements of most, if not all road users and is considered the most cost effective option.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

16. The proposal is estimated to cost approximately \$152,000 to fully implement.

Do the Recommendations of this Seminar Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

17. This sum is currently not identified in the LTCCP and it is unlikely that the proposal would attract funding from any minor safety works budgets due to the absence of any pedestrian related crashes. It follows that the proposal will be placed on a priority improvements list and wait until funding is available.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

18. The Land Transport Rules provides for the installation of cycle lanes, painted medians and the installation of parking restrictions.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

19. Yes, as above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

20. Aligns with the Streets and Transport activities by contributing to the Council Community outcomes – Safety.

Do the recommendations of this seminar support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

21. Yes, as above.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

22. Pedestrian and Cycle Strategy.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

23. Yes, as above.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

24. Consultation with affected parties will occur once finance for the project is available.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board support the Traffic Management Plan in principle.