

3. HEREFORD STREET PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

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:
 - (a) Seek Council approval for the safety works, including the installation of a warning system, and the new traffic restrictions associated with the Hereford Street Pedestrian Crossing project.
 - (b) Seek approval for the project to proceed to implementation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Hereford Street Pedestrian Crossing project relates to the installation of a pedestrian crossing on the section of Hereford Street between Colombo Street and Manchester Street. This section of Hereford Street is a collector road, carrying approximately 9,500 vehicles per day (seven day average). The area generally consists of commercial, retail, office and educational facilities.
3. The project was initiated in 2003, when the Christchurch Community House (141 Hereford Street) requested a pedestrian crossing between the National Mutual Arcade and Westpac Lane. Council investigations in 2003 identified that this section of Hereford Street met the New Zealand Ministry of Transport Warrant for a pedestrian crossing.
4. The Council has chosen to trial a new flashing light warning system in conjunction with the proposed pedestrian crossing installation. The warning light system is activated by pedestrians waiting to use the crossing facility, and warning lights in the road alert an approaching motorist that the crossing is in use.
5. Consultation has been undertaken with business occupiers and owners in this section of Hereford Street. Feedback on the publicity pamphlet and informal feedback from some businesses has indicated both support for and opposition to the project. The opposition largely relates to the potential for the crossing to delay traffic in the street. Some feedback has raised specific issues which can be addressed during the detailed design phase of the project.
6. The preferred option at Hereford Street is to install a pedestrian crossing, and pedestrian crossing warning lights. The preferred option involves the installation of kerb buildouts, landscaping, seating and cycle stands. The preferred option also involves the relocation of two loading zones (with a consequential loss of seven parking spaces), and the relocation of a mobility space. The warning lights will be installed six months after the installation of the crossing to allow for 'before' and 'after' surveys to be undertaken to assess the success of the warning light system.
7. It is recommended that the Council grant approval for the proposed pedestrian crossing for Hereford Street (as illustrated in Attachment 1) to proceed to implementation.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. The estimated total cost for the Hereford Street Pedestrian Crossing project is \$140,000 inclusive of all consultation, design, construction and project management. The cost includes the installation and analysis of the pedestrian warning light system.
9. The Hereford Street pedestrian crossing project is part of the Safety Improvement Programme and is programmed for construction in the 2005/2006 financial year.
10. With the appropriately gazetted warning light trial system, there are no legal implications from this project.
11. Without the approval of the resolutions for traffic restrictions, the restrictions will not be enforceable upon implementation.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:

1. Approve the safety works for the Hereford Street pedestrian crossing (as illustrated in Attachment 1) for implementation including the installation of a warning light system.
2. Approve the following new traffic restrictions for the Hereford Street project:

Move existing Mobility park to new location:

- (a) That the existing mobility park on the north side of Hereford Street at its present position commencing 140.2 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 6 metres in a west direction be removed, and reinstated on the north side of Hereford Street commencing 145 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 7 metres in a east direction.

Move existing P5 Loading Zones to new location:

- (b) That the existing P5 Loading Zone on the north side of Hereford Street at its present position commencing 128.6 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 11.4 metres in a west direction be removed, and reinstated on the north side of Hereford Street commencing 99.6 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 17.5 metres in a west direction.
- (c) That the existing P5 Vehicles Only Loading Zone on the south side of Hereford Street at its present position commencing 111.2 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 11.2 metres in a west direction be removed, and reinstated on the south side of Hereford Street commencing 89.6 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 14 metres in a west direction.

Removal of Existing “No Stopping” Restrictions:

- (d) That the existing no stopping restriction on the north side of Hereford Street at its present position commencing 115.4 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 13.4 metres in the west direction be removed.
- (e) That the existing no stopping restriction on the south side of Hereford Street at its present position commencing 122.6 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 23 metres in the west direction be removed.

New “No Stopping” Restrictions

- (f) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the north side of Hereford Street commencing 114.1 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 27 metres in the west direction.
- (g) That the stopping of vehicles be prohibited at any time on the south side of Hereford Street commencing 103.6 metres west of the intersection with Manchester Street and extending 44 metres in the west direction.

(The Chairperson, Bob Todd, and Brenda Lowe-Johnson declared possible conflicts of interest in this issue, and withdrew from the discussion and voting thereon.)

BACKGROUND - HEREFORD STREET PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Description of site

12. This project relates to the section of Hereford Street between Colombo Street and Manchester Street. This section of Hereford Street is a collector road and is approximately 230 metres long, and has an existing width of 14 metres.
13. In this section of Hereford Street there is a pedestrian entry/exit point to the National Mutual Arcade. This arcade links through to High Street in the City Mall and hence there are high pedestrian flows with people travelling down Westpac Lane from the Square and continuing through to the National Mutual Arcade to City Mall. There are also a large number of educational institutes in the area, with many students using facilities around the area.

Project initiation & development

14. Safety concerns and the large number of pedestrians crossing in Hereford Street at Westpac Lane have highlighted the need to provide a pedestrian facility. Christchurch Community House (located at 141 Hereford Street) also requested that a pedestrian crossing be installed at this location.
15. In 2003 an investigation identified that this section of Hereford Street met the New Zealand Ministry of Transport Warrant for a pedestrian crossing. A pedestrian crossing is warranted if during a normal weekday, the flows taken over any one hour period meet the following criteria:
 - (i) The flow of vehicles per hour exceeds 300 (Vehicle flows in this section of Hereford Street in 2002 were between 500-680 vehicles per hour).
 - (ii) The sum of pedestrians per hour multiplied by vehicles per hour exceeds 45,000 (313 pedestrians per hour x 618 vehicles per hour = 193,434 (measured on the 28/10/2003).

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING WARNING LIGHT TRIAL

16. In conjunction with the pedestrian crossing project, the Council has chosen to take this opportunity to trial a pedestrian crossing warning light system to further improve pedestrian safety.
17. The pedestrian crossing warning light system is an in-pavement flashing light system which is activated by pedestrians using the crossing facility to alert motorists to their presence.
18. In order to install and trial this new technology, approval is required from Land Transport New Zealand. A "Proposal for Pedestrian Crossing Warning Lights Trial" has been produced and presented to Land Transport NZ. The proposal outlines the sites to be trialed, background to the proposed technology and the proposed data collection, monitoring and analysis methodology. In response to this, Land Transport NZ has developed a draft Gazette Notice for the trial, which will legalise the trial of this technology.
19. The trial proposal is for two Christchurch sites, Tuam Street and Hereford Street, and one Auckland site. The Auckland site has also been included in the trial at the request of the Auckland City Council and Land Transport NZ, since trial approval can be given for a number of sites but only for a single trial proposal.
20. The trial proposes to carry out a number of studies before, during and after construction to assess the success of the warning light technology. The surveys will include traffic volumes, traffic speeds, video camera analysis, pedestrian surveys and motorist surveys. Processes have been put in place to manage the collection and analysis of this data. To analyse the effectiveness of the warning light system at the proposed Hereford Street pedestrian crossing, it is proposed to install the crossing and then install the warning light system after six months. This will enable the effectiveness of the warning light system to be assessed (i.e. before and after surveys can be undertaken).
21. Land Transport NZ will provide the necessary approval for the use of the warning light system. They have been involved during the development of the three projects and have drafted a Gazette Notice for the trial.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

22. The objectives of the project are to:

- Provide a safe pedestrian crossing on Hereford Street (between Colombo Street and Manchester Street)
- To provide the opportunity to trial a new form of advanced warning light; and
- To assess the success of the warning light trial.

CONSULTATION

23. A publicity pamphlet was delivered to the business occupiers on this section of Hereford Street by the consultation leader for the project. The same pamphlet was also posted to identified absentee owners. The publicity pamphlet included the concept plan for the proposed pedestrian crossing and sought feedback from the business owners/occupiers.
24. Eleven feedback forms were returned. Of these seven were in support of the project citing improved safety when crossing the road. Two responses received were opposed to the proposed crossing as the respondents felt it would further delay traffic in the area, would take up parking spaces, and that pedestrians could cross at the traffic signals at either end of this section of Hereford Street (i.e. using the traffic lights at Manchester Street or Colombo Street). The remaining two respondents did not indicate their support or opposition but raised a number of issues for consideration during the detailed design process.
25. When the consultation leader visited the businesses in the area to deliver the pamphlet the informal feedback received was both in support of and in opposition to the proposed crossing. The business occupiers were supportive of the proposed crossing and felt it would improve a currently dangerous crossing situation. Those in opposition felt the crossing would increase congestion in the street.

OPTIONS

26. Three options were assessed as part of the Hereford Street pedestrian crossing project:
- (a) Maintenance of the status quo (i.e. no pedestrian crossing facility).
 - (b) Installation of a pedestrian crossing and the installation of pedestrian crossing warning lights – Preferred Option
 - (c) Installation of a pedestrian crossing without pedestrian warning lights – not preferred.

Assessment - Option (a) The Status Quo

27. Maintenance of the status quo will not result in any social, cultural, environmental or economic benefits. Maintaining the status quo is not consistent with the Road Safety Strategy.

Assessment - Option (b) Install a pedestrian crossing, and pedestrian crossing warning lights. Preferred Option

28. Option (b) consists of the following key elements:
- (a) Narrowing a section of Hereford Street to 7m with kerb buildouts. A raised pedestrian crossing is proposed at this narrowed section.
 - (b) Warning lights are proposed along the pedestrian crossing and on the approaches to the pedestrian crossing. These lights will be set into the road and will flash when a pedestrian uses the crossing to alert vehicles the crossing is in use. It is proposed to install these lights six months after the pedestrian crossing is installed so that before and after surveys can be undertaken to assess the success of the warning light system.
 - (c) Landscape planting, including two pin oak trees (one of either side of the street), are proposed on the kerb buildouts. These trees will match the two existing trees at the proposed crossing location. The landscape planting will be low level planting that will not impair visibility or access to the crossing.

- (d) On the southern kerb build out (outside the food hall) a seating area and rubbish bin are proposed.
 - (e) Cycle stands are proposed on the kerb buildouts on both sides of the street.
 - (f) Relocation and extension of the loading zone on the northern side Hereford Street to outside 149 Hereford Street. This relocation will result in the loss of three parking spaces.
 - (g) Relocation and extension of the loading zone on the southern side of Hereford Street to outside 156 Hereford Street. This relocation will result in the loss of four parking spaces.
29. This option will result in the following social, environmental and economic benefits:
- (a) **Social:** Improvement to safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians.
 - (b) **Economic:** Improvement of a Council infrastructure asset.
 - (c) **Environmental:** Enhancement of this section of Hereford Street with landscaping and street trees.

Assessment - Option (c) Upgrade pedestrian crossing

30. Option (c) is identical to Option (b), except that it does not include the installation of the in-pavement flashing light system. Whilst Option (c) may provide some safety improvements it is not anticipated that it will provide the same degree of safety improvements as the warning light system – however this will only be validated by this proposed trial.

PREFERRED OPTION

31. Option (b) has been selected as the preferred option. The preferred option has been selected because:
- It best satisfies the project's aims and objectives.
 - The option provides a unique opportunity to install and trial new technology with potential safety benefits to the community.
 - The option has the full support of the project team and has some community support.
 - The project also has support from Land Transport New Zealand, who have offered to assist with resources for the trial data collection and analysis.
 - Additionally, the project provides a unique opportunity for the Christchurch City Council to work and project manage a job in conjunction with the Auckland City Council to produce a New Zealand wide innovative solution to improve pedestrian safety.