

160a North Parade
Shirley
CHRISTCHURCH 8006

Ph: 03-3857-661
Fax 03-3857-998

4th May 2006

**Long Term Council Community Plan
Christchurch City Council
P O Box 237
CHRISTCHURCH**

Dear Sir

Please find attached my submission on the Bus Priority Proposals.

Please RECORD MY REQUEST TO BE HEARD.

Please also formally advise me in writing of the date and time of the meeting to present my submission(s).

Yours Sincerely



Philip Haythornthwaite

Submission to the Christchurch City Council

In Response to

Bus Priority Pamphlet >>>> Keeping Christchurch moving Received 19th April 2006

With regard to priority to be given on bus routes as listed in the document numbered 0,10,11,13,15,28,66, 67, Orbiter - 43, 46, 70, Metrostar, Orbiter - 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, Orbiter, Metrostar, Rangiora

I WISH to be heard in support of this submission.

Submitter: Mr Philip Haythornthwaite
Address: 160a North Parade
Shirley
CHRISTCHURCH 8006

Pages:

Proposal: THAT in implementing the Bus Priority>>>> Keeping Christchurch moving proposals the Christchurch City Council implements and honours its duties already enshrined in law that are not currently being implemented or met.

Reasons in support of the above proposal:

A) Introduction

On Wednesday 19th April 2006 I received the pamphlet from the Christchurch City Council (hereinafter CCC) entitled Bus Priority>>>> Keeping Christchurch moving outlining proposals to increase the efficiency of Bus Passenger travel time to and from their destinations. The document gives the impression that by improving the movement of buses through various junctions on the routes listed that patronage will increase dramatically and that passengers will be happy. This is not so. Regardless of petrol price increases a private car gets you to and from your destination happily in the manner and direction you want to go. If this proposal is to work successfully then there are many more tasks that need attending to in order to make the public transport system an attractive system to use.

I will outline what I believe needs doing on the cities bus routes to increase patronage.

B) Statutory Obligations

The council does not meet its obligations to the public transport user in its design and maintenance of the footpath and area around the bus shelters or Bus Stops. The picture of the Brougham Street - Colombo Street corner is a good example of this. At approximately 350 Colombo Street there is a bus stop. However, the CCC has never enforced any orders on the proprietors to keep the hedges clean off the footpaths making it very difficult for people congregating or waiting for the buses to let mothers with prams, wheelchair users, mothers with push chairs the electric wheelchair user or just the average pedestrian through to use the footpath without *having to step into the traffic lane putting themselves at risk*. The CCC is obliged to ensure that there is sufficient space at all bus stops for the bus shelter, excess passengers congregating around the shelter and the legal rights of access and use of the footpath by others who desire to use it. The CCC has a legal duty to people to keep all footpaths clear at all times and this would be a first and very positive start to things.

C) Bus stop design bad

The CCC needs to improve the basic standards of the bus stop design. Virtually every bus stop is built differently especially when it comes to the sealed area that the passenger has access to when getting on and off the bus. On occasions you get off into grass or in winter after rain it can be mud. All bus stops must have a sealed area available to them that is 150% of the length of the largest bus in use so that all patrons but especially the elderly, the blind and the wheelchair user can be *guaranteed* that the surface they get out of the bus onto when exiting the bus is safe and clean. This is not the case in Christchurch.

Also the shelter design in some cases is bad or non-existent. An example of this is Outbound, Route 70 at the Palms. The size and length of the shelter is a miserable pittance as it is screwed or bolted to The Palms wall. It does not really shelter anyone.

D) Bus stop locations dangerous

There are bus stops which I consider dangerous and would recommend to people that they avoid them. An example of this is inbound route 70 opposite Windsor House, New Brighton Road. Traffic comes very fast around the corner through Burwood Pak and any passenger who has got off here would be very foolish to try to cross the road to visit Windsor House as it is a blind bend.

Another good example of this is Stanmore Road/Avonside Drive on route 60 at Beverley Park. The front edge of the bus stop is by a sump. Any person but especially the blind or the elderly could put a cane or their stick into it and go flying while either getting onto or off the bus. No bus stop should be placed under any circumstances in any situation to encourage deliberate injury. This is tantamount to negligence by the CCC and ECAN.

All bus stops must be in a safe and easily accessible place. Three (3) principles must always apply when placing bus stops.

They are: Approachability, accessibility and usability? If NO is the answer to any of these then the bus stop is incorrectly placed.

E) Transfer time too short

This has now been reduced to two hours from the previous Four Hours. When this was done ECAN told everyone that the bus system was far more efficient and this was no longer justified. The data clearly shows that this is not so. However, ECAN has seen fit to hike the bus fares by nearly 25%. When the user is hit at both ends in bus use time and financially they naturally think that it is better to return to their car or put the car away and not use the bus at all. Just use the local mall if they can walk to it. Therefore the public transport system loses out all round.

F) Fare Structure

- i) The fare structure that is currently in place does not attract people to use the bus efficiently. It also works against the person who is legally barred from using other forms of transport on the grounds of their health, such as people who have epilepsy or are blind. A person such as myself can never drive a motor vehicle unless you have been legally cleared by a Consultant Neurologist stating that you have been free of seizures for at least 12 months, preferably 24 months. The CCC and ECAN need to think about this very seriously as you are already disadvantaged not being able to drive a motor vehicle in many aspects of life and it has a heavy impact on career opportunities as well. The councils need to have a special lower rate fare so that the disabled community can get around easily and cheaply based on certification by a GP or consultant. Also the *all day fare structure* is not promoted enough and if a person is willing to pay their fare in one go then it should be at a discount rate. i.e. \$3.00c. If therefore you don't use the bus again during the day that's your loss but the option is there if the person chooses to take it.
- ii) ECAN's excuses for not providing a special lower rate for the elderly or others who are in any way disadvantaged is that the current fares charged by the bus companies is the maximum amount set and they are welcome to reduce the fares to the travelling public if they wish. ECAN knows full

well that this is not going to occur as everyone wants to make the maximum amount possible for the minimum possible effort and the public be damned. The bus companies desire is naturally to make the maximum profit and ECAN's desire is to provide as little subsidy or support as possible as well, even if it puts its rates up year after year. ECAN and the CCC need to face up to the reality that the public wants the lower rates back and the politicians need to face up to the issue and get on and re-instate them. The bus companies will only provide the lower fares if directed by ECAN and ECAN needs to show some courage and get on and issue that direction forthwith.

G) Problem Intersections and Roads

The intersection of Gloucester Street/Madras Street is one junction I feel could be improved with bus only lights. The same should be done at Gloucester Street/Manchester Street as well. The CCC's main problem at the moment is that the bus priority lanes are scattered. A far more comprehensive test is needed involving more junctions with bus lanes in place. It should also be borne in mind that more buses than just shown on the map use these two junctions and it would impact on route 60 to Parklands, route 21 to Mount Pleasant, Route 51 to Aranui as well.

The delays at Hills Road/Shirley Road are not just caused by Queues. The delays are contributed to significantly by peoples failure to make use of the free turn that is available when eastbound traffic is turning right from Hills Road into Shirley Road by the right turning arrow. People sit waiting a long time to turn left into Hills Road from Shirley Road because it is a free turn. This junction and all others should be controlled by a light indicating it is a free turn so that BOTH parts of this junction operate in exactly the same way. I believe that this would significantly increase traffic movement and remove the confusion that seems to exist at this and other junctions.

H) Inconsistent Junction Design

- i) The CCC must accept a considerable amount of the responsibility for this problem as it rebuilds the City's streets. The re-painting of junctions is very sloppy and inconsistent. The painting of the cycle lanes is a very good example of this. Hills Road/Shirley Road/Warrington Street is a perfect example to look at. On some approaches they are painted in place and on the opposite side exiting the junctions they are not. The standards applied are appalling. All junctions when re-painted must be brought up to scratch on ALL SIDES not just the piece that is being rebuilt. This will also help remove confusion for all road users as well. Also some junctions are so tight that the amount of time and care that is taken to turn the corner adds considerable delays to the trips times. The CCC, its traffic wardens and the police need to be far stricter on those drivers who stop forward of the white lines painted on the road. The lines are put there for a purpose and if the CCC and Police don't enforce the laws you can only expect contempt to be shown for them.
- ii) The reason that the Moorehouse Avenue intersection is so efficient is that it gives the priority to the left lane to let the bus through and has good clearance to exit the junction as well.. The Bus "B", left turning arrow and Bicycle lights all work together BEFORE THE MAIN GREEN PHASE CUTS IN. If the same principles were applied at Colombo Street/Lichfield Street going southbound and all other junctions then a lot of our current problems would be reduced and timing improved.

I) Buses still discriminatory

The CCC needs to be aware that only 67% of all buses in use are super low floor buses. This still means that a person can have difficulty getting onto a bus. When are we going to be guaranteed that all buses on all routes are going to be super low floor buses and the CCC and ECAN comply with the HRA 1993?

Please ensure that my wish to be heard on this submission is recorded.


Philip Haythornthwaite