

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Malcolm Taylor, Area Engineer
Corporate Plan Output: Safety Improvements 9.5.90	

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the consultation and action taken in response to the petition and report presented at the 1 February 1999 meeting.

BACKGROUND

Residents from the area of Castletown Place and Bower Avenue signed a petition requesting the closure of the accessway between Castletown Place and Palmers Road. Residents expressed concern over the acts of vandalism and general nuisance to Castletown Place caused by people using this pedestrian accessway.

The City Streets Unit did not support the closure of this accessway as it provides an easement for power, phone, and sewerage services, as well as a pedestrian and cyclist access, from Castletown Place to Palmers Road. In this area are located; two schools, a kindergarten, shopping centres, bus stops, sport venue and recreation facilities. The concerns of vandalism and general nuisance were referred to the New Brighton Police for their attention.

SURVEYS

A further survey was undertaken to ascertain the opinion of the remaining residents in Castletown Place, and also the opinion from the adjoining residents in Bower Avenue, Palmers Road, Bowhill Road, local schools, the Kindergarten and a sports club in the area. The results of the petition and survey are tabled below:

- Petition:** 15 people wanted the pedestrian accessway closed.
- Survey:** 9 people wanted the pedestrian accessway closed.
- Survey:** 27 people wanted the pedestrian accessway to remain open.
- Survey:** 2 people were neither for nor against.

A pedestrian count of the accessway was carried out on the 9 February 1999, between 7.30 am and 4.30 pm. During this period it was recorded that 170 pedestrians and cyclists used this accessway, of which 100 were school students and 70 adults.

The pedestrian accessway shortens the distance from the Bower Avenue corner of Castletown Place to the Palmers Road entrance by 145 metres.

CONSULTATION

A public meeting to discuss the petition for the closure of the Castletown Place pedestrian accessway was held in the North Beach Tennis Clubrooms, at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 5 May 1999. Community Board members, the Community Constable, Council Officers and 26 residents from the area attended the meeting.

Residents expressed concern at the vandalism being caused in the area from users of the accessway, and for the graffiti, dog faeces, and general rubbish in the accessway. It was considered that most incidents happen at night, especially on Friday nights and during the weekends.

OUTCOMES

The Community Constable asked that all non-urgent incidents be reported to the Neighbourhood Watch Support Co-ordinator for the area, who would pass on batches of complaints, allowing the Police to programme their resources in this area.

The use of locked gates at either end of the accessway between the hours of dusk to dawn was discussed. However, it was considered that this would create a “no mans land” in the middle and cause other problems at night.

Additional lighting was proposed to improve the safety of the accessway but was opposed by the adjoining property owner.

The accessway is currently cleaned on a monthly contract, or as required, similar to other accessways/alleyways within the city. A special clean up of Castletown Place accessway was carried out to remove the graffiti, dog faeces and general rubbish. Signs have been posted in the accessway to remind dog owners of their responsibility to remove their ‘Dog Foul’ in public places.

CONCLUSIONS

Although a majority of residents at the meeting were for the closing of the accessway, a number of residents who used the accessway, were opposed to a closure.

Castletown Place accessway is classified as a legal road/accessway and it provides an easement for power, phone and sewerage services. Pedestrians and cyclists also frequently use it.

With likely opposition from users of the accessway (including services authorities) it would be difficult to formally close the facility and dispose of the land.

The City Streets Unit does not support the closure of this accessway.

- Recommendations:**
1. That Castletown Place pedestrian accessway remain open for public access.
 2. That the signatories to the petition be informed of the decision.

Chairperson's

- Recommendation:**
1. That the aforementioned recommendations be adopted.
 2. That the Board request feedback from residents on maintenance and cleaning issues, in particular, in six months time.