

4. THORRINGTON ROAD – TRAFFIC CALMING UPDATE

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The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with information to alternative solutions to help curb excessive speed in Thorrington Road.

BACKGROUND

At a previous Board meeting Mr Dave Jardine addressed the Board in support of a petition from residents of Thorrington Road asking the Council to prioritise traffic calming measures already planned for the area.

Suggestions put forward for consideration were:

1. Block off the Cashmere Road end of Thorrington Road.
2. A traffic island be placed on the corner of Thorrington Road approaching Colombo Street.
3. Judder bars be installed along the length of Thorrington Road.
4. Traffic lights be installed to replace the roundabout situated on Cashmere Road/Colombo Street.

The Area Engineer outlined the concept of “Living Streets” which would exclude the use of speed humps (judder bars), and suggested that as a first step, arrangements be made to use the Council’s Speed Check Trailer.

The Board **decided**:

- “1. To support the present priority given to the Living Streets project.
2. To recommend a further report be provided on the other alternative solutions, including those named above.
3. That residents be advised of the decisions taken and the steps proposed to be taken.”

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

At the previous Board meeting four alternative solutions or suggestions were put forward, as outlined above.

1. Block off the Cashmere Road end of Thorrington Road

This option would make Thorrington Road into a no through road. It would remove all traffic entering the road from Cashmere Road. This would require unanimous support from all residents and require an official road closure to take place. This is generally a lengthy process that can be very difficult to achieve, especially if objections to the closure are received. Anyone can object to the closure and if the objector’s concerns cannot be satisfied then the matter would be referred to the Environment Court for a decision.

2. A traffic island be placed on the corner of Thorrington Road approaching Cashmere Road

This would be a traffic island built on Cashmere Road to stop vehicles turning right into and out of Thorrington Road. Cashmere Road is a busy arterial road with minor arterial status within the city’s roading hierarchy. Some 12,000 vehicles per day pass the intersection of Thorrington Road. Numerous crashes have occurred at this point due to loss of control at the bend on Cashmere Road. Vehicles run wide and have gone through the fence and hit the house on the eastern corner of the Cashmere/Thorrington Road intersection. Building an island in this location would cause more crashes. The island would force east-bound vehicles further to the left, thus having a greater chance of being caught out by off camber at the Thorrington Road intersection. If Thorrington Road (where it joins with Cashmere Road) was on a straight section of roadway, this option has good merit.

3. Judder bars be installed along the length of Thorrington Road

In October 1999 Council put a moratorium on speed humps/judder bars for purposes of slowing traffic in a street. At that time Council embarked on investigating other ways to slow traffic. "Living Streets" has now been released as a new way to deal with this problem. The Living Street philosophy was recently shown to Board members in a presentation at a Community Affairs Committee meeting. Much better and more appropriate traffic calming devices are now able to be used. Two effective devices are the one-way angle slow points and road narrowings.

4. Traffic lights be installed to replace the roundabout situated on Cashmere Road/Colombo Street

The Main Roads Engineer, Brian Neill, has addressed this option in a recent memorandum to Board members (copy attached).

PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION

At the time Mr Jardine presented the residents' petition to the Board, Thorrington Road was already included in the list of proposed Neighbourhood Improvement Works for traffic calming. An earlier petition from the residents meant it was added to this list in 1997. Due to its priority with other requests for traffic calming Thorrington Road was placed tentatively for funding in the 2002/03 financial year. This was published in the five year Capital Expenditure Programme 2000 edition. Since that time, the Area Engineer has managed to have the reconstruction of Thorrington Road added to that same year.

This now means in the 2002/03 financial year, funds will be provided not only for traffic calming, but renewal of the kerb and channels, footpaths, grass berms and verges. The suggestions discussed in this report and other traffic calming devices will be discussed with the residents at the time that consultation takes place (which will be nearer to the time of reconstruction).

CONCLUSION

With the addition of the kerb and channel renewal to the proposed traffic calming budget in the 2002/03 financial year, Thorrington Road will now be reconstructed using the full "Living Streets" philosophy. This will provide the opportunity to provide the best possible outcome to the ongoing traffic concerns in Thorrington Road.

Recommendation: That the information be received.