

4. THORNYCROFT STREET – THE INTEGRATION OF UNDERGROUNDING WITH OTHER ASSOCIATED SERVICES AND PLANNED WORK WITH BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Ken Stevenson, Support Manager, Service Delivery Ph 371-1555
Corporate Plan Output: Capital Works Programme	

The purpose of this report is to respond to the resolution of the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board made at its 1 May meeting regarding a deputation from the residents of Thornycroft Street who were seeking the undergrounding of existing overhead services.

The resolution was ‘*That the integration of undergrounding with other associated services and planned work(s) in Thornycroft St, along with budget implications be reported to the June meeting of the Board.*’

BACKGROUND

Some relevant points are: -

- It is planned to resurface the footpaths in Thornycroft St in the near future.
- The replacement of the kerbs and channels in Thornycroft St is not programmed in the current five year programme.
- Telstra Saturn are currently installing new cabling across the whole city.

Kerb and channel has a useful life of about 80 years and footpath surfaces have a useful life of 18 years, which means that during the life of the kerb and channel, footpaths will be resurfaced about three times. The timing of the resurfacing is done to ensure that when the kerbs and channels are replaced this ties in with the footpath replacement cycle as close as possible. The footpaths in Thornycroft St are being resurfaced now because of their condition and because the kerb and channel renewal is more than 10 years away.

There is about 480km of old style kerb and dished channel in the city. This is being replaced at the rate of 20km per year, which means it will take another 24 years before all the old style channels are replaced.

The condition and age of the channel drive the kerb and channel renewal programme. A number of other factors are considered in the fine tuning of this programme. The condition of the carriageway, steepness of the road shoulder, user safety issues and co-ordinating with other projects are the other factors considered. In both condition and other factors Thornycroft St is well down on the priority list and at current levels of funding is unlikely to appear on the programme within the next ten years.

The Council budgets for the undergrounding of overhead services and this is at the rate of about 5 – 6 km per year. There is 900km still to be converted and at the current rate it will take around 155 years to underground the entire city. The priority for this work is on main roads and in conjunction with the kerb and channel renewal programme. Some undergrounding is also funded from the Council’s Urban Renewal Budget. Thornycroft St does not meet either of these criteria.

COSTS

The cost of footpath resurfacing is about \$25,000 per km of footpath or \$50,000 per ‘road’ km.

The cost of kerb and channel renewal, which includes new footpaths and some street enhancement, is about \$450,000 per km of kerb or \$900,000 per ‘road’ km.

The cost of undergrounding Orion and Telecom cables and installing new lighting is \$400,000 per ‘road’ km.

Based on the above, the estimated cost to upgrade Thornycroft St and place the overhead wires underground is \$465,000. The footpath resurfacing is estimated to cost \$18,000.

There is no budget provision currently available for the kerb and channel replacement or the undergrounding. There is budget provision for the footpath resurfacing.

INTEGRATION WITH TELSTRA/SATURN WORK

Back in May 2000 the Council's Project Manager for the Telstra/Saturn project engaged Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu to consider and report on cost implications and opportunities that might be available by coordinating the Telstra/Saturn work with the Council's undergrounding programme and other programmed work.

They considered the following scenarios:

1. Where an area is listed on the Council's undergrounding programme for treatment within the next 5 years and Telstra/Saturn intend to go underground.
Is there any benefit to the Council in bringing undergrounding of these areas forward to enable joint trenching and therefore cost savings?
2. Where Telstra/Saturn intends going underground where power is currently overhead.
Should Council consider undergrounding Orion and Telecom (joint trenching) with Telstra/Saturn? What are the potential savings to the Council?
3. Areas where other road works are being conducted irrespective of Telstra/Saturn's presence.
Should Telstra/Saturn at least duct (perhaps without cables at this stage) these areas?

The report concluded that there would be considerable co-ordination difficulties and any savings would not be significant.

OPTIONS

Under current budget provisions the only way of moving Thornycroft St up the kerb and channel renewal programme is by substituting it with a higher priority project. This is not recommended as the higher priority project will require more maintenance if it is delayed and the residents in that street will be disappointed with a programme change. There is also an issue relating to assets that are replaced before the end of their depreciated life in that the residual value must be accounted for and allowed for in the budget.

Even if the kerb and channel replacement were brought forward there would be no funding for undergrounding within the current budget provisions. A cost sharing arrangement with residents is possible but the Council's share of this would need to be specifically budgeted. The Council would also need to consider a formal policy on this issue.

CONCLUSION

The only works proposed and budgeted in Thornycroft St at the present time are footpath resurfacing work and Telstra/Saturn cabling work. There is no cost benefit in bringing forward the kerb and channel replacement and undergrounding to coincide with this work.

Options are to bring Thornycroft St up the kerb and channel renewal programme by substituting another project. For undergrounding, cost sharing is an option if the Council agrees and is prepared to budget for its share.

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:**
1. That the foregoing recommendation be adopted.
 2. That the residents' representative be provided with a copy of the report.