

## 20. WOOLSTON BURWOOD EXPRESSWAY

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The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Woolston Burwood Expressway, in particular Stage 2, for which a contract was recently tendered. The approval to delegate to the Land Transport Subcommittee the tender recommendation to Council, is also sought from the Committee.

### THE EXPRESSWAY

The Woolston/Burwood Expressway project includes a 4.3 kilometre road and off road cycleway, a bridge across the Avon River and a wetlands development. The project has been staged into three distinct, independent routes replacing existing linkages. The expressway will provide a carriageway more suited to the volume of traffic and in particular heavy vehicles.

The extent of the stages is:

Stage 1a	Travis Road to New Brighton Road	0.7 km	completed August 2000
Stage 1b	New Brighton Road to Eureka Street	2.1 km	completed September 2001
Stage 2	Eureka Street to Birch Street	1.5 km	to be constructed this year

### STAGE 1B

On Wednesday 19 September 2001 a large crowd was present for the official opening of ANZAC Drive between New Brighton Road and Wainoni Road. Retiring Councillor David Close officially opened the project with a speech and then passed over the ribbon cutting to a local resident.

Although the new road has helped to reduce the amounts of heavy traffic travelling through adjacent residential areas there have been problems experienced by the local residents and non-motorised users of the ring road. Noise problems will be alleviated with the application of an asphalt overlay later this year. The landscaping and grass berms were left in an overgrown state during the holiday period and adjacent residents were displeased. A regular maintenance regime is now in place ensuring that the roadside will be kept tidy. The landscaping is presently being reviewed with the objective of enhancing it by bulking up the planting in this stage.

The bridge has certainly drawn some attention with the unusual lighting standards but generally the comments have been positive. The underpasses for cyclists and pedestrians were designed to provide a continuation of the riverside paths but also provide a people friendly space. To help achieve this the walls were kept as low as possible to maximise light entry and openness. The designers were aware that at very high tides, primarily spring tides of which four were expected each year, that the river would breach the underpass walls. It appears that this problem is occurring more frequently than anticipated especially with the recent heavy rain.

Pumps are installed to clear small amounts of rainwater but these will not cope with total flooding of the underpasses. When flooding does occur larger pumps are brought in to remove the contained water as soon as possible. The maintenance contractor monitors the tides and takes action as necessary. Gates, either side of both underpasses, will indicate to users that the path is closed and an alternative route suggested. These gates are to be installed shortly.

Graffiti on the underpass walls and the bridge generally, is removed as soon as it appears. This system of close monitoring has kept the walls clear to date.

### STAGE 2

#### Description

This stage commences at Eureka Street, gradually veering away from Bexley Road and crossing Pages Road. A new traffic signal-controlled intersection will be installed at Pages Road. The existing roundabout at the intersection of Pages Road and Bexley Road will be removed and thresholds installed on Bexley Road to reinforce the residential nature of the street. The road then proceeds south to a connecting point on Bexley Road at Birch Street. A shared cycle/pedestrian pathway is to be constructed over the full length of the expressway.

Features of this stage include the creation of a park like area to the south of Eureka Street on the riverside of the new expressway (opposite Carisbrooke Street). The area will be planted with shrubs and specimen trees and provides an opportunity for locating seats with views to the river. The vertical riverbank will be regraded to slope gently to the waters edge providing river access via an informal beach.

There are also features that will help to reduce the effects of flooding which has always been a problem in this low lying area of the city. The grass swales throughout the project will direct storm water to piping systems and help to increase the quality of runoff before it enters the river. The creation of a wide swale outside Bexley Reserve will increase storage of runoff, not only from the road but also from Bexley Reserve. The width necessary for this swale has allowed the cycleway to be aligned in the reserve itself providing a more pleasant and safe cycling environment. The Estuary Branch Drain is to be realigned and regraded increasing the capacity for storage and the ability to transport storm water to the main Estuary Drain. The extension of the Knights Drain retention basin, north of Pages Road, also increases storage capacity for storm water. These improvements are being combined with the Expressway work and will lower the demand on the pumping stations catchments within Bexley.

### **Road Stopping**

The legal closures of Carisbrooke Street and Eureka Street were notified in August 2000. The closures of Bexley Road (north end and south end), Brook Street and Birch Street were advertised last year and local residents lodged a number of objections. After consultation with the objectors two local network projects were considered necessary to help reduce the effects of the closures. All the objections were then withdrawn and closures legally notified.

### **Property**

There are two property settlements outstanding within the limits of this stage. If the tender had been postponed until these were resolved there could have been further delays to the start of construction. The tender acceptance will be subject to Council approval on 28 March. The Property Unit is confident that the outstanding issues should be resolved within this timeframe. If the settlements are not resolved, the successful Contractor will be able to programme the work to avoid any further delays. Both properties involve land severances rather than total purchases, and both are taking some time as the project requires a change in the access to the properties.

### **Programme**

The road stopping process and property purchase negotiations have caused a delay in the start of construction of Stage 2. Construction was to start in January this year but it will now not be until April 2002 at the earliest. The tenders for this contract closed on 6 March and are currently being evaluated using the weighted attribute method. It is proposed that a report recommending the successful contractor will be presented to the Land Transport Subcommittee on 20 March, asking them to approve the recommendation and forward it to full Council on 28 March.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
  2. That the Committee delegate tender recommendation authority to the Land Transport Subcommittee.

### **Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.