

7. ST MARTINS ROAD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

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The purpose of this report is to discuss the issues relating to traffic management along St Martins Road between Wilsons Road and Riverlaw Terrace, including the future street renewal programme for this section of roadway.

BACKGROUND

Following on from correspondence between residents and the Council concerning increasing traffic volumes and parking around the entrance to Hillview Christian School, a petition was received by the Board at its meeting on 11 November 2003. The Board asked that the City Transport Unit investigate and report on the matters raised in the submission. This report addresses those issues.

PETITION

The petition received by the Board at its meeting on 11 November 2003 contained 202 signatures. It would appear that most householders who have properties fronting the narrow section of St Martins Road have taken the opportunity to add their signatures to the petition. The bulk of the petition is made up of people who live in the general (south Christchurch) area.

"We the undersigned, are residents in the part of St Martins Road between Wilsons Road and Ensors Road with addresses between 81 and 131 St Martins Road. We are concerned about the state of St Martins Road and request that you give urgent consideration to expediting the road reconstruction with new kerbing and channelling.

The issues we are most concerned about include the following:

Safety Features

- *Small bridges over gutters mean turning sharply from roadway into driveways or conversely, having to pull straight out of driveway onto far lane of roadway to avoid possibility of dropping into gutter; this is difficult when volume of traffic is very heavy at peak times.*
- *Caregivers dropping children off at Hillview School parking over residents' 'bridges' to do so mean residents can't use own driveways and cannot see past parked cars to back out of driveways. A car was sideswiped recently even when parked on verge.*
- *Excessive traffic speeds at all times day and night.*
- *Potholes and breaking up along the sides of the road. A cyclist falling at a peak time would be in considerable danger.*
- *The Orbiter bus stops complicate safe use of designated parking strip.*

Aesthetic/Annoying Features

- *Heavy traffic noise and vibration from increasing use of the road by trucks.*
- *Use of coarse chip seal when road was last resurfaced gives significant amount of tyre noise, especially noticeable in front upstairs bedrooms.*
- *Rubbish collects in gutter and there is insufficient vacuuming to keep gutter free of leaves and other rubbish.*
- *Grass verge is steep towards the gutter, making it difficult to mow and trim tidily and has many stones drifting onto it from the road.*
- *Prosser Street intersection grating always floods during heavy rain.*

Thank you for your consideration.

Signatures below:

(Please note that some respondents chose not to be identified.)"

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

This section of St Martins Road is part of a minor arterial route linking Wilsons Road with Ensors Road and destinations to the north. The 24-hour average daily traffic flow in Ensors Road south of Opawa Road was measured at 7,546 vehicles for the week commencing Tuesday 23 September 2003. Traffic flow in the southern section of St Martins Road (south of Gamblins Road) is 5,000 vehicles per day. The section of St Martins Road north of Wilsons Road carries a higher volume, but cannot be regarded as excessive (at between 7,000 and 8,000 vehicles per day) for a minor arterial road.

At school drop-off and pick-up times there is a high demand for kerbside parking near the St Martins Road entrance into Hillview Christian School. During these periods residents often find it difficult to drive out onto St Martins Road from their properties. Driveway entrances are generally narrow and the space available for turning manoeuvres is often compromised by cars being parked close to the driveways.

In response to residents' requests for some additional road space the City Transport Unit, late last year, widened the sealed shoulder on the north side so that vehicles could be parked between the road edgeline dividing the traffic lane and the grass verge that is a feature of this section of St Martins Road between Wilsons Road and Riverlaw Terrace. Observations at school drop-off and pick-up times suggest that caregivers are now parking their vehicles on the sealed shoulder between the grass verge and the road edgeline.

Traffic flows along St Martins Road are moderate and are well catered for with the existing road layout. These conditions are unlikely to change in the short-term and should serve to provide the required level of service until the street renewal programme is undertaken in three or four years' time.

STREET RENEWAL PROGRAMME

This section of St Martins Road to a point short of Riverlaw Terrace which has already been widened has now been brought forward to the draft five year capital works programme (2007/08).

Residents have expressed a need for the Council to provide adequate on-street parking between the trees which, combined with widened driveway entrances, should feature in any redevelopment plan for this section of St Martins Road.

HILLVIEW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The school roll is increasing and a number of caregivers bring children to the school from other parts of the city. Travel by car is always going to be a high component of travel to the school and it could well be that parking demand will increase as the school roll expands.

The school does have off-street parking which is serviced near the main vehicle entrance in Wilsons Road. On a normal day, between 10 and 20 cars can be parked at any one time in St Martins Road, a similar number in Wilsons Road and in the off-street parking area within the school grounds. Although a number of parents walk their children to school it would appear that most, at the present time, travel by car.

The Council has provided a pedestrian island in Wilsons Road adjacent to the main entrance to the school. The island provides a safe crossing point for people connected with the school and others who have a need to cross the road in the vicinity of the school entrances, which are located approximately 100m from the roundabout at St Martins Road. The school has facilities on both the east and west sides of Wilsons Road. People can also gain access to the school facilities from Gamblins Road and St Martins Road. It is understood that the school roll (2004) stands at 322.

Board members, when considering the petition in November 2003, suggested that a "Safe Routes to School" programme possibly incorporating a "walking school bus" could be initiated at the school. Principal Alan Harrison observed to a staff member late last year that he was appreciative of the work being undertaken by the Council to assist the school, but suggested that, due to the wide catchment area, it is unlikely that a "Walking School Bus" would be a viable proposition in the short-term. However, this can be reviewed at any time, depending on an increase in children living locally.

An adult warden supervises pupils crossing Wilsons Road between the junior school on the west side of Wilsons Road and the main school on the east side. Our observations suggest that pupil safety is not an issue at the present time.

DISCUSSION

Residents' concerns expressed in the petition presented to the Board in November 2003 included comments about traffic volumes, difficulties of entering and exiting driveways, and parking by caregivers dropping off and picking up children from Hillview Christian School. Traffic speed has also been cited, along with road maintenance issues and the presence of Orbiter bus stops on the narrow section of St Martins Road.

The "noise and vibration" from heavy traffic using the road is also a concern for some.

CONCLUSION

The sealing of the shoulder (parking lane) along the north side of the road has addressed most of the critical concerns relating to traffic safety. The street renewal programme has been brought forward into the draft five year capital works programme, which will provide an opportunity to address many of the features of the existing road layout about which residents are concerned.

Although there is an expressed concern about heavy traffic "noise and vibration" and "excessive traffic speeds", these are issues that are not uncommon on similar minor arterial roads in the city. There is no immediate action that can be taken to address these issues, which will no doubt be assessed during the scoping work that will be required for the proposed street renewal project.

Side channel cleaning is undertaken on a regular four-weekly cycle, and the Council's maintenance contractor is being made aware of the need to maintain the grass verge and check the stormwater system at Prossers Street for flooding during heavy rain.

Staff

Recommendation: That the petitioners be informed of the progress made on addressing concerns raised by residents and the ongoing commitment of the Council to maintain the existing road asset, until such time as the Council can undertake a street renewal project for this section of St Martins Road.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the staff recommendation be adopted.