

7. NEW BRIGHTON MALL SLOW ROAD

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Transport and City Streets Manager
Author:	Michelle Flanagan, Streets Capital Programme, DDI 941-8665 and Jeanette Ward, Project Manager, Streets Capital Programme, DDI 941-8876

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's support for the New Brighton Mall Slow Road Project, and that the Board recommend that the Council approve the New Brighton Mall Slow Road for final design, tender and construction.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The New Brighton Mall Slow Road Project involves the introduction of a one-way slow road, and consequent de-pedestrianisation of Seaview Road between Union Street and Oram Avenue (New Brighton Mall). The aim of the project is to provide a high-street environment with convenience shopping.
3. Consultation on the project has been undertaken during the preparation of the New Brighton Master Plan and the development of a concept plan for the slow road by Retail Consulting Group. Further consultation on the 'detail' of the slow road is proposed on an 'inform' basis. This consultation will involve a letter to the businesses in the mall and an opportunity to meet with the project team, a City Scene article, and information boards in place in the mall. The Consultation Leader's contact details will be provided as a point of contact for questions and to collect any feedback.
4. A concept plan for the slow road, prepared by Retail Consulting Group, has been developed into a scheme plan by City Solutions. This scheme plan (*attached*) has the following features:
 - a 4-metre wide one-way road positioned closer to the north side of the mall to maximise the sun on the south side for pedestrians and café seating.
 - 23 2-metre wide, car park spaces with a mixture of P30 and P5 restrictions depending on the adjacent features i.e. P5 outside the ATM, plus a loading zone.
 - five pedestrian crossing points consisting of raised platforms with tactile pavers at the road/footpath interface.
5. Landscaping, seating, planter boxes, lighting, and relocation of the children's playground will also be provided as part of the project. A number of other features detailed in the Retail Consulting Group concept plan will be the subject of other projects.
6. There was an expectation by the businesses in the mall that the project would be constructed during the winter months. Unfortunately this has not occurred, and there is now an effort to progress the project so that it is completed by the end of November, thereby avoiding the Christmas period.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The estimated total cost for this project is \$1,350,000, inclusive of all consultation, design and project management.
8. The New Brighton Mall Slow Road is part of the Major Amenity Budget for the New Brighton Commercial Area, which is to fund the slow road, and any other projects identified for the improvement of the commercial area. Funding of \$1,339,143 (in total) has been allocated in the 2004/05, 2005/06 and 2006/07 years.
9. A targeted rate (on the businesses adjacent to the slow road) was suggested some years ago to help fund the slow road, in the order of \$610,000. To date this has not been included in the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) process. To do so now will be a lengthy process. Council has three options; construct the slow road now with no targeted rate; delay the slow road construction until a targeted rate has been pursued; or construct the slow road now from budgeted funds and pursue the targeted rate to fund additional projects once they are identified.
10. The 1978 Special Order declaring a pedestrian mall in New Brighton has been revoked. There are no other legal implications from the project.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Support the New Brighton Mall Slow Road as shown in Attachment 2.
2. Recommend that the Council approve the New Brighton Mall Slow Road for final design, tender and construction.
3. Support the option of implementing the slow road now using the total budget available for the New Brighton Commercial Area, and acknowledging that it will not be possible to fund any of the slow road from a targeted rate.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the abovementioned recommendations be adopted.
2. That a targeted rate be pursued to assist with funding additional projects as they are identified.

BAC GROUND ON NEW BRIGHTON MALL SLOW ROAD PROJECT

11. The New Brighton Mall Slow Road Project involves the introduction of a one-way slow road, and consequent de-pedestrianisation of Seaview Road between Union Street and Oram Avenue (New Brighton Mall). The introduction of the slow road has a long history, and this is summarised in a flow chart included as Attachment 1.
12. The aim of the project is to provide a high-street environment with convenience shopping. The objectives are to:
 - Provide a one-way road that encourages low speeds.
 - Ensure pedestrians recognise that the road environment is separate to the pedestrian environment and allow for suitable pedestrian crossing.
 - Provide short-term parking.
 - Maintain access for the disabled.
 - Provide appropriate lighting and continue the light standard theme used in the eastern part of the mall.
 - Provide landscaping to match the eastern end of the mall.
 - Ensure the commercial viability of any businesses are not compromised.
 - Consider 'Crime Prevention through Environmental Design' concepts in the design.
 - Ensure the design is functional, healthy, safe and friendly in terms of the community.

CONSULTATION

13. Consultation on the slow road was initiated in 1998 when the concept was proposed. A number of the businesses in the area initiated the concept, and supported the reintroduction of a road through the mall. A concentrated consultation effort was undertaken during preparation of the New Brighton Master Plan, released in September 2002. This consultation involved a series of public meetings and presentations to the elected members. The outcome appeared to be support for the slow road.
14. When the Council advertised the proposed legal reintroduction of traffic into the mall in 2003, some objections were raised. The proposed slow road was finally approved in May 2004 following an Environment Court Hearing. Retail Consulting Group then undertook consultation with the businesses as part of the concept plan finalisation.
15. We are now proposing to undertake consultation on the final scheme plan. There are limited moveable elements in the project and therefore limited opportunities for the community to influence design (particularly as the principle of the slow road has been confirmed). However, feedback on street furniture and landscaping is welcomed, and there is the potential to incorporate suggestions or make changes in line with the project scope and budget. It is therefore proposed to consult with the community on an 'Inform' only basis, and the consultation plan includes two tasks:
 - Contacting the directly-affected businesses within the mall area with an information letter and the final concept plan. Members of the project team will then make themselves available at a location in the mall to answer any queries and receive any feedback. This task will be undertaken prior to the Community Board meeting.

- Informing the wider community via a City Scene article and display boards at each end of the Mall.
16. The letter and City Scene article will contain the contact details of the Consultation Leader as a contact point for the businesses and the community to raise questions or issues.

ASSOCIATED ROADING PROJECTS

17. To ensure the one-way slow road complements the surrounding network, some additional works are required at the following locations:
- Union Street between Seaview Road and Beresford Street is currently one-way; this will require conversion to two-way flow. This conversion would involve a kerb build-out and lane marking amendments. The existing zebra crossing would also be removed.
 - Seaview Road at Hardy Street requires a change of priority (priority now to Seaview Road traffic). This will involve some kerb re-alignment work.
18. These projects will be carried out as separate contracts but are also intended to be complete by the end of November 2005.

TARGETED RATE

19. In 2000 the slow road was estimated to cost \$610,000 in excess of the budget. The majority of commercial operators in the area, who were in support of the slow road, were receptive to the idea of a targeted rate. Council staff then defined an area of benefit which included 59 businesses. These parties were polled for support of the rate; this resulted in 80% plus agreement. This sent a clear message to proceed so the rate was put into the draft Annual Plan 2001/02. However, Council rejected this proposal, requesting that the slow road be looked at as part of an overall plan for New Brighton.
20. Since 2002, when the Council approved the slow road concept as part of the New Brighton Master Plan, there has been no action requested towards including the targeted rate into any Annual Plan or LTCCP process. Also there has been no identified need for additional capital funding, only a desire for additional projects. This means that any requirement to introduce the targeted rate will require a complete initiation of the process.
21. The capital budget for the Major Amenity project, 'New Brighton Commercial Area' is for funding the slow road and any other projects to improve the amenity of the New Brighton Commercial Area (which are unidentified at this stage). The latest estimate for the slow road is only 5% higher than the budget. Therefore currently there is no budget shortfall. However once the other projects required in the New Brighton Commercial Area are defined there will be a budget shortfall. Targeted rates, if any, can only be applied where there are projects identified in excess of the existing budget. This is not the case in the New Brighton Commercial Area revitalisation project at the moment.
22. If a targeted rate was to be included in the LTCCP the recommended decision making process would be as follows:
- define the projects and resulting capital expenditure (a lengthy process in itself)
 - define the ratepayers who will pay the targeted rate by defining and justifying the area of benefit
 - determine the targeted rate calculation
 - consult with the ratepayers and obtain written agreement to the rate
23. All of which should be completed before the LTCCP is issued in draft. The wider community would be consulted on the proposal as part of the LTCCP process. The next opportunity to be included in the LTCCP process is November 2005. It should be noted that revenue from a targeted rate can only be gained once the relevant asset is constructed, ensuring benefits are received prior to charging.

FINANCIAL OPTIONS

24. The Council is now in a position to implement the slow road and the community that is in support of the road would like to see it constructed before Christmas this year. The Council has three options available in relation to the potential targeted rate.

Option 1

The Council construct the slow road now from budgeted capital funds and pursue the targeted rate to fund additional projects once they are identified. Completing the decision making process tasks as described above before November 2005 is unrealistic so inclusion in the LTCCP would need be by special consultative procedures. There is the risk that the additional projects will not justify a targeted rate or gain community support resulting in the other potential projects being unfunded.

Option 2

The Council make the slow road construction subject to the attainment of the targeted rate. This will delay the construction of the slow road significantly due to the process required. There is the possibility that the targeted rate will not be obtained and the slow road would eventually cost more due to the potential increase in construction costs.

PREFERRED FINANCIAL OPTION

Option 3

The Council proceed with construction of the slow road and do not pursue the targeted rate. This will result in the total budget being spent on the slow road only and any other projects being considered through normal processes.

In order to construct the slow road before Christmas this year and therefore not delaying the project, and for the difficulties in imposing a targeted rate for any additional projects we recommend this option (options 3).

PROGRAMME

25. There was an expectation by the businesses in the mall that the project would be constructed during the winter months. Unfortunately this has not occurred, as the concept plan from Retail Consulting Group was only received in March 2005, and there is now an effort to progress the project so that it is completed by the end of November, thereby avoiding the Christmas period. It is estimated that the slow road will take 4 months to construct, therefore the approvals, design and tender process will need to be complete by the 31 August 2005.

ROAD DESIGN OPTIONS

26. The Retail Consulting Group provided a single concept plan for the one-way slow road to the Council. This concept plan has been developed into a scheme plan by City Solutions, and this is included as Attachment 2.
27. A number of other features detailed in the Retail Consulting Group concept plan will be the subject of other projects. The Retail Consulting Group plan included toilets as the need for toilets in the retail area was identified as an outcome of the New Brighton Master Plan. Determining the need for and most appropriate location for toilets will be a separate project as part of the New Brighton revitalisation project. The Retail Consulting Group plan also included a sculpture court. This is likely to be progressed by the Arts and Public Spaces Team.

PREFERRED ROAD DESIGN OPTION

28. The preferred option, included as Attachment 2, has the following traffic features:
 - a 4-metre wide one way road positioned closer to the north side of the mall to maximise the sun on the south side for pedestrians and café seating.
 - 23 2-metre wide, car park spaces with a mixture of P30 and P5 restrictions depending on the adjacent features i.e. P5 outside the ATM, and a loading zone.
 - five pedestrian crossing points consisting of raised platforms with tactile pavers at the road/footpath interface.
29. In terms of street furniture and landscaping details, the materials selected are intended to suit the marine environment and minimise long term maintenance costs. The features are as follows:
 - A mixture of clay pavers, concrete with exposed aggregate and asphalt footpath surfacing.
 - Approximately 20 wooden slat bench seats.
 - Concrete rubbish bins with an exposed aggregate finish (upgraded existing bins in the area will be reused).

- The lighting standards continue the theme used in the eastern part of the mall.
- Concrete bollards on both sides of the road at the bend (design of these still underway)
- An allowance for café seating will be made in four locations along the slow road.
- The planter boxes will be concrete with an exposed aggregate top to complement the planter boxes in the eastern section of the mall.
- The landscaping is to be extensive to assist in minimising the loss of the existing, well-established planting.
- The plants will be predominately native, for example, cabbage trees and grasses, and is intended to provide protection for the seating areas from wind.
- The four existing palm trees will be relocated to provide a gateway effect at the entrance and exit to the slow road.

30. The children's playground, currently located in the middle of the mall (between 35 and 77 New Brighton Mall), will need to be relocated to accommodate the new slow road. The proposed new location is a sunny sheltered site on the eastern side of the slow road, adjacent to 35 New Brighton Mall. The existing structure is suitable for relocation, but may require some modification to fit comfortably in the new space.

ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS

The Preferred Option

A one-way slow road through a section of New Brighton Mall between Seaview Road and Beresford Street.

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
Social	Enhancement of the mall area to provide a bustling high street environment and improved streetscape. Proposal is consistent with the New Brighton Master Plan.	Nil
Cultural	Nil	Nil
Environmental	The mall is enhanced through the provision of landscaping.	Nil
Economic	Potential benefits to business owners/operators adjacent to the slow road in the New Brighton Mall.	Capital Expenditure

Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:

Primary alignment with community outcome *“Our City’s infrastructure and environment are managed effectively, are responsive to changing needs and focus on long-term sustainability”* by recognising the changing needs of the users of New Brighton Mall, and managing assets to optimise the value and usefulness over time.

Also contributes to *“Our economy is based on a range of businesses which enable wealth creation and employment opportunities”* by increasing potential benefits for businesses in the mall.

Impact on Council’s capacity and responsibilities:

Nil impact

Effects on Maori:

It is considered there are no effects on Maori.

Consistency with existing Council policies:

The proposal is consistent with the Road Safety Strategy particularly in respect to designing and managing roads with appropriate speed environments and providing safe facilities for pedestrians.

The proposal is also consistent with the New Brighton Master Plan to provide a high street/convenience shopping area.

Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:

The views and preferences of the local businesses were sought in the preparation of the development plan, and in the preparation of the concept plan by Retail Consulting Group. The views of those in opposition to the slow road concept were heard during the revocation of the Special Order declaring a pedestrian mall in New Brighton, and at the Environment Court. There are limited elements that the community can influence in the preferred option, and therefore it is proposed to undertake consultation on an ‘Inform’ only basis.

Other relevant matters:

Nil

Maintain The Status Quo (If Not Preferred Option)

Retention of the New Brighton Mall as it currently exists (ie no introduction of the slow-road).

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
Social	Parties in opposition to the slow road are satisfied.	Status Quo is inconsistent with the New Brighton Master Plan. Inconsistent with the Council direction to date. Does not contribute to the revitalisation of the New Brighton mall.
Cultural	Nil	Nil
Environmental	Nil	Nil
Economic	No capital expenditure.	Nil

Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:

Maintaining the status quo is not aligned to any Community Outcomes.

Impact on Council's capacity and responsibilities:

Nil impact.

Effects on Maori:

It is considered there are no effects on Maori.

Consistency with existing Council policies:

Maintaining the status quo is not consistent with the CCC Financial Plan and Programme.

Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:

Feedback in support of retaining the status quo was heard during the revocation of the Special Order declaring a pedestrian mall in New Brighton, and at the Environment Court.

Other relevant matters:

Nil