

1. ROAD STOPPING: SOMERSET CRESCENT, AT BROUGHAM STREET

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The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval to commence the procedure to stop Somerset Crescent at Brougham Street.

BACKGROUND

Approximately five years ago residents of Somerset Crescent between Brougham Street and Selwyn Street approached the Board to seek its support to mitigate some traffic safety difficulties they were experiencing.

The residents' safety concerns related to the use of this section of Somerset Crescent as a short cut by motorists, to avoid the traffic signals at the Brougham Street/Selwyn Street intersection. These motorists often exit Brougham Street at high speed and continue along the street at speed, thereby making it less safe for residents to enter or exit their properties either in a vehicle or on foot. This section of Somerset Crescent is also used as a route to and from school by pupils attending the local schools.

Many of these motorists are then failing to obey the 'stop' control on Somerset Crescent at its intersection with Selwyn Street.

The area engineer at that time, Jeff Owen, developed a scheme plan for closing Somerset Crescent at the Brougham Street intersection. This plan was well received by the residents and also accepted by the Board and was then put into the Annual Plan process to ensure the necessary funding to complete the project was obtained.

CURRENT SITUATION

Funding is now available for this project to proceed in the 2004/05 financial year. As part of the capital works team planning for the implementation of this work an additional consultation process was undertaken to ensure that residents and local businesses were still supportive of the project. Residents were interviewed on a one-to-one basis and fully support the project. In addition to their oral support, residents also organised a petition requesting that the Council implement the road stopping as soon as possible.

A formal publicity plan was produced and this was delivered to residents and absentee owners as well as all the businesses in the Addington shopping area on Selwyn Street, between Brougham Street and Coronation Street. The publicity plan was also delivered to local schools and emergency services. To date, there have been no objections to the proposal.

RATIONALE FOR ROAD STOPPING

The stopping of Somerset Crescent at its intersection with Brougham Street was requested by residents to stop speeding motorists using their street as a short cut.

Brougham Street has a 60 km/h speed limit and with the existing kerb alignment at Somerset Crescent, it is relatively easy to turn off Brougham Street and into Somerset Crescent without reducing speed. Many of these motorists are then failing to stop at the Somerset Crescent/Selwyn Street intersection so they can enter into Selwyn Street ahead of those motorists that continue along Brougham Street and then made a left turn into Selwyn Street at the signalised intersection. This has led to a number of crashes and near misses at the Selwyn Street/Somerset Crescent intersection.

As an alternative to road stopping the project team investigated the option of implementing severe traffic calming measures along this short section of Somerset Crescent, but the impact of this on residents would be high. This treatment would most likely consist of several speed humps installed on Somerset Crescent. Speed humps create a lot of extra noise for adjacent properties and they are often seen as a 'challenge' to some motorists. This option would mitigate some of the existing concerns but would not be as effective as the road stopping.

In comparison, the road stopping would resolve all the current safety concerns of the residents and also provide an opportunity to install additional planting and landscaping. The additional landscaping will then provide a 'green' buffer between Brougham Street and Somerset Crescent, albeit a small one. Motorists who currently use this section of Somerset Crescent as a short cut are able to access Selwyn Street via the Brougham Street/Selwyn Street signalised intersection and therefore are not unduly inconvenienced.

Consultation was also undertaken with Transit New Zealand in the very early stages and they have approved the road stopping. Transit New Zealand are supportive of the project as stopping Somerset Crescent reduces the number of conflict points along Brougham Street, a state highway.

PROJECT COSTS

The estimated project costs currently amount to \$41,000.

Board

Recommendation: That approval in principle be granted for the stopping of Somerset Crescent at Brougham Street.

Note: Sue Wells retired from this item and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.