

Submission: Thorndon Resident Association (TRA) submission to Traffic Resolution 134-22 Botanic Garden ki Paekākā to City Cycleway

Introduction

This document is a general submission made on behalf of the Thorndon Residents Association (TRA). There are also more specific submissions made by the impacted Thorndon residents and businesses and visitor group (who's position the TRA fully supports) and individual TRA members.

Further to the onsite Thorndon meeting on 21st March attended by the Mayor, Ward Councillors and council officers, and subsequent TRA public meeting at Loaves and Fishes Hall on 19th July it is very apparent there are significant concerns and objections from local residents, business owners and community groups principally over the impacts of carparking removal but also the manifest failure by the planning group to engage with these groups in the early stages of the project, and now the over compressed timeline for the cycleway once the implementation was suddenly shifted to the Traffic Resolution process.

The overriding message we are receiving from the community is that the “take all and leave nothing” approach that has been proposed by the planners of this route is unacceptable. Whilst most residents support improvements for cyclists this cannot be at the expense of effectively the total removal of parking around the Village, Botanical gardens, cemetery and sports facilities and the current plan absolutely does not accommodate users of these city attractions.

The family or elderly visit to the gardens from out of town or attending the various summer program events will unquestionably be severely impacted and no weight is placed of this loss.

It is also our view that the current approach of proceeding with completion of this section of cycleway in isolation from the other adjoining segments of the LGWM cycleway (blue line routes) is flawed and the public is not being made aware of the interactive impacts. The combined network needs to be scrutinised by the public (and not just the Cycle lobby and public transport interests) before proceeding with the individual segments. The current piecemeal approach obscures the overall effects on each suburb as the effects from other stretches of the route are not being considered. For example in this section of the route the extension into Karori is not under consideration it is obvious to all that the lane reductions for motorist and Bus platforms will with certainty lead to major traffic delays for all surrounding suburbs.

Furthermore, we find the council Business Case and MCA (Multi Critical Analysis) of the route with the myopic selection of stakeholders and assessment criteria is scandalous, with little or no consideration of



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Botanic Garden ki Paekākā ► City

Wellingtonians have asked for better transport options and action on climate change so Wellington City Council is getting on with it.

As part of preparing our city for the future, we've developed designs to make it safer and easier for people to ride or bus between the city and Botanic Garden ki Paekākā towards the western suburbs.



This route will make a safer bike connection and faster bus trips between the city and Botanic Garden ki Paekākā towards the western suburbs. We're also upgrading the intersection at Bowen Street and The Terrace for anyone walking, as part of Let's Get Wellington Moving's central city walking improvements.

This will be an interim route so designs will use adaptable materials so we can quickly install changes once the design is confirmed. We'll collect feedback and data to inform tweaks and permanent changes in the future.

Check out the details and make an online submission between Tuesday 5 July and 5pm on Tuesday 26 July.

transportprojects.org.nz/botanic



resident property assets, business interests, or wider traffic implications. Publishing this type of analysis to back an orchestrated outcome is despicable and has no place in a professional public service.

Finally in all the city planning and council publicity material the bias toward the cycle lane is clear as it likewise shown in the council liaison to date. "Were Rollin Out the Green Carpet" etc etc, The TRA are particularly concerned about the impartiality of the review process of the submissions and have little confidence that resident and business concerns will earn the same weighting as other stakeholders. This bias has migrated even as far as the TR 134-22 online submission form with tick box posing questions typically presented as supportive propositions, eg "*How important is it to make street improvements so buses are quicker and more reliable?*" (There would be quite different answers If the questions was posed as ; "*do you think buses should block the road to allow people on and off*")

Above all the council published Daily Average Cycle Count data for Glenmore St April 22 is **189 weekday and 106 weekend**, and the benefits to a small fraction of the community needs to be balanced against the significant detrimental effect on the wider community.

Discussion of the wider impacts of the Cycleway on Residents, business and the wider community.

Proven traffic congestion by reducing the route to two lanes for motorists; The residents of Thorndon along with Karori commuters, Wadestown and surrounding suburbs have fresh in their memories the council closures of the two middle lanes along Bowen and Whitmore Streets to enable the upgrading of rising and gravity mains commencing in June 21 until completion around February 22.

This required mains upgrade provided a live insight on the effect of strangling the Bowen and Whitmore St arterial routes on the wider traffic flows to and from surrounding suburbs; The traffic down Glenmore St is mostly Karori Northland commuters and the Southbound traffic down Tinakori Rd is generally feeding from Wadestown and Northern Suburbs taking the most direct route onto the Terrace.

During the lane closures the traffic throughout the working week and weekends jammed to a stop up Bowen St to the Tinakori lights which consequently backed traffic along Glenmore St often as far as Karori itself plus the entire length of Tinakori Rd to Thorndon Quay. Traffic at peak times meant often only one or two cars progressed through the Bowen St/Tinakori Rd lights into Bowen St at each light change creating significant traffic delays.

As a consequence we can confidently advise that “Transitional trialling with future feedback potentially allowing for change” of the Cycleway reducing Bowen and Whitmore St to single car lane each way is not required as this has already been done for over 8 months during mains repairs with proven and unacceptable detriment to commuter traffic in the region and corresponding impediment to essential and emergency services.

Implementation of Bus Boarding Platforms; These platforms will similarly and unnecessarily delay motorist traffic and cause widespread traffic congestion and the related fuel wastage and pollution. The thin arguments about allowing buses to more readily merge into traffic is unsubstantiated and as users will attest buses are rarely if ever delayed on this route due to problems in merging back into traffic. If providing buses the ability to readily merge into traffic is a priority then this would be more efficiently achieved by traffic regulation similar to the no passing of School bus requirement. (ie let the bus in first when it indicates)

We understand that the user priority on the proposed bus platforms are Pedestrian first and Cyclist second; Presumably buses stop at bus stops to allow people to board and alight so for safety reasons there should be no cycle traffic along the platform between the bus and pavement whenever the bus is stopped. This raises the question as to why the buses stop in the middle lane in the first place when the cycles need to stop anyway.

Thirdly there is genuine angst about the platforms among the elderly residents who find it nerve wracking as it is to alight from a bus without stepping into a cycle lane.

Carparking losses The removal of around 150 car parking spaces around the Botanical Gardens, Anderson Park and the Bowen Cemetery has significant implications far beyond the obvious impacts on Residents and Businesses in the vicinity. The changes will have the following impact ;

- Family visits to the gardens will become a thing of the past as there will be no uptake to use alternative transportation from out of the city. There is no alternative parking during the week.

- Weekend sport and evening sports practices at widely used Anderson park will be significantly impeded.
- The Bowen St Cemetery has a significant support group and this is a widely visited destination. Visitors and tours of the cemetery will be impacted by the difficulty in finding carparks.
- Residents are affected not only by the reduction in parking but it will also impede visiting a resident.
- Directly affected residents along Tinakori Rd will no longer be able to find spaces for trades or places to position a bin for renovation or repair work. A simple roof replacement will become a major logistical undertaking.
- The Village is known for lively cafés and boutique businesses and the reduction in car parking will have a significant adverse affect which will not be mitigated by customers taking alternative means of transport as the council would like to believe.
- Council events in the Botanic Gardens. A paucity of parking will impact citizens who would otherwise like to attend but for the hazard of finding a car park (hired or otherwise).

Reduced Traffic Speeds; This proposal is thoroughly supported and we believe in precincts with narrow streets such as Thorndon speed reduction along safety marking, signposting and Cycle awareness is the way

Summary

The Thorndon Residents Association are strongly of the view that a lot more time is needed to bring all stakeholders into agreement on this key proposed cycle route and the impacts need to be considered in conjunction with the other adjoining sections of the route. We believe there would be common agreement in the community on the following.

- Reducing the motoring lanes along the route to a single lane each way along the cycle route will create proven and unacceptable traffic congestion along key arterial routes to and from the city.
- The removal of a high number of carparks around the Gardens, Cemetery and Park will have a unquestionable impact on the usage of these long established city facilities.
- The Incorporation of Bus platform and bus parking removal achieves nothing other than unnecessary traffic delays.
- The removal of this number of carparks will have a major impact on local Residents, visitors, businesses and Trades.
- This section of the LGWM Cycleway cannot be considered in isolation from future additions to the route and there needs to be delays to allow real community consultation on the combined impacts.

Support

The Thorndon Residents Association have canvassed residents and businesses in the area and base our submission on verbal comment, Website feedback and public meeting outcomes.

This plan has been submitted by Trevor Glogau member of the Thorndon Resident Committee and drawn up in conjunction with other members of the committee and the Thorndon residents and businesses and visitor group representative group.

We confirm the Thorndon Residents Association (TRA) wishes to reserve a right to orally represent this submission.

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