



**Submission on traffic resolution TR147-23 [Karori Connections](#)**

1. The Thorndon Residents' Association opposes the Traffic Resolution as currently proposed.

2. Goal

The goal is noted, to re-imagine and re-invent parts of some Wellington streets for the 60% of the population who assert they would ride, except that they don't feel safe to do so i.e. those children, families and grandparents who aspire to ride, assuming they have the competency to do so, and they might *feel* a route is safe.

3. Outside scope:

WCC's City Design team is not concerned to design mode shift for

- the 1% of the population who are already "*avid*" cyclists,
- nor for the 7% who are "*confident cyclists*", and
- clearly not for the estimated 30% who will "*never ride*".

4. Subjectivity

Those who aspire to using two-wheeled travel modes, must assume for themselves that they have the competencies to do so. There is no independent test; no regulated licensing to certify a rider's skillset or their knowledge of the road code. It's entirely over to individuals to judge whether they *feel* that a route is safe; it's subjective. Flawed decisions are typically tested sooner or later. All cyclists eventually discover their limits or lack of judgement, and gravity dominates, and a mishap occurs.

Perhaps ACC statistics might attest to the rising frequency of mishaps involving scooter riders or cyclists.

5. Environmental factors

The skill set required to control two-wheeled vehicles in Wellington's hilly terrain (especially downhill), adverse windy weather, on narrow road typologies, with poor surface conditions (detritus), makes it inappropriate or difficult to compare cycling in Wellington against any other 'cycling utopia'.

Wellington is the windiest capital in the world and it can be a serious challenge for cyclists; gusts, etc.

A percentage of the 60% of the aspiring cyclists in Wellingtonian will need to navigate routes devoid of 'protection', or designated cycle lanes, in order to ride from home.

#### 6. Inconvenient truths

The factors above could well curb the optimism on the uptake of cycling in Wellington.

The percentage of the population in Wellington who are likely to become active cyclists could well have been overstated?

So it has to be asked where exactly is the Council's verified data and analytics that proves the business case for this kind of investment?

#### 7. Options

To encourage safer roads perhaps a culture/attitude that would utterly respect the road as a 'shared space' could return a larger benefit. Something that would cover all of the city's streets; this something the *Bike Strategy* fails to do (can never do).

A cyclist is a valid user, on any local street, regardless of whether a 'protected' cycle lane exists or not. 'Protected' cycle lanes do not assist cyclists who have a different destination e.g. on the other side of the street, etc.

Sometimes the existence of a 'protected' cycle lane encourages other road users to protest that a cyclist is not using a cycle lane! This creates new problems for everyone.

We need a more consistent approach to safer roads. Sharing works!

The current proposal has inconsistencies and introduces impactful win-lose scenarios on citizens; in some road segments the proposal is totally compromised by attempting to plug square pegs into round holes?

#### 8. Consultation

The DISCOVERY stage of the project; the stage preceding this TR / DECISION stage; failed to capture all the *views and preferences of persons likely to be affected*<sup>1</sup>, especially along the route, nor were they consulted on other options.

The published design has been prematurely promoted into this regulatory process.

Consequently, the analysis of some viable options, safety issues, and various metrics are absent from this proposal.

#### 9. Access to the Botanic Garden

*'Open spaces are crucial to mental health, physical health, and feeling connected to nature and one another'*. WCC acknowledges this by the recent approval of *Te Whai Oranga Pōneke Open Space and Recreation Strategy*, June 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> Ref. Part 6 Local Government Act 2002, s78

The Wellington Botanic Garden is one of the city's *most significant destination landmarks*. It contributes every day to WCC's *Open Space and Recreation Strategy*.

How users get to/from this destination frequently demands a transport mode other than public transport or any *active* mode. As recorded above at least 30% of the population will never use an *active* transport option, and a percentage of the 60% group (children, families and grandparents) won't use an active mode for the purposes of a visit to the Botanic Garden. There are numerous reasons for this, including access to public transport, scheduling, and that active modes are impractical for people travelling into the city to seek the benefits of recreation in the garden. Pets, prams, the paraphernalia of picnics, or cricket gear (Anderson Park), etc, slims down the options for easily accessing and using the Botanic Garden for their purposes.

Many people rely either upon family or friends to visit the garden using a private vehicle. They need to park as near as possible, because small children or any person needing assistance or companion to walk, typically do not find it easy to wander long distances up and down hills just to access the various areas. These are not the people with 'mobility' permits but are nonetheless needing assistance to get to the Botanic Garden as they can't do it easily alone.

#### 10. Glenmore St parking

There's insufficient car parking within the Botanic Garden boundaries.

Hundreds of useful kerbside parks were removed as part of the implementation of the *Botanic Garden ki Paekākā to city* project. Now this proposal would remove kerbsides car park in Glenmore St as well.

It is necessary to retain all kerbside car parking alongside the Botanic Garden for the entire segment between the Founders Entrance and West Entrance to the garden.

#### 11. Glenmore St - parallel parking design at the Botanic Garden

The proposal would have a driver sitting 5m away from the kerb, with a bicycle lane and a concrete plinth in between the driver and the pavement.

The proposal would have vehicle passengers having to balance and avoid the tripping hazard of the proposed unlevel concrete plinth (separators).

Then alighting vehicle passengers would need to cross a 2m wide cycle lane, with their equipment, to reach the pavement.

This parking design is awkward to say the least, and hazardous for the profile of many garden visitors.

The solution is to continue to allow cars to parked against the kerb. That would be the same as the proposal for mobility parking and the bus park proposed for the northern end of Glenmore St; the cycle lane is proposed on the carriageway side (RH side) of these parked

vehicles.

#### 12. Catering for aspiring cyclists in Glenmore St

To especially encourage the 60% of the population who don't feel it is safe to cycle, there is a serene and easy option.

Existing lanes runs parallel to Glenmore St on the Botanic Garden side of the road boundary. These wide, paved lanes, Ludlam Way and West Way, could provide 500m of serene, one-way cycling all the way from the main garden gates (Founders Gate) to the intersection of Glenmore St with Orangi Kaupapa Rd.

Shared pedestrian/cycle routes are common in other parts of Wellington, including where the pedestrian count is relatively high e.g. Oriental Bay, the waterfront, etc. Additionally, those routes also involve bi-directional cycling that is much more complex than a one-way cycle lane.

However, this WCC traffic resolution summarily and curiously dismisses this option rather than attempting any compromise. It merely cites a concern for pedestrian conflicts. Yet the Karori Connections TR proposal includes other shared pedestrian/cycle paths, and furthermore the *Botanic Garden ki Paekākā to city* design has already implemented more serious conflicts in Tinakori Rd. The design inconsistencies are conspicuous.

Since these separated options exist, why not trial these as a safer cycling option? Particularly for tentative riders? Otherwise, unless options like these are tested the credibility of WCC's approach to achieving its aspirations would need to be seriously questioned.

#### 13. Residential property access

The proposed 'streets rebalancing' risks creating winners and losers:

- the **winners** are those who **transit** the streets.
- the **losers** are those who **live** at addresses along the streets.

The proposal either removes or seriously restricts kerbside car parking outside or near residential properties. This can have major implications for existing property owners. Parking at or near the frontage is critical for a plethora of house maintenance purposes, but it could also be necessary for a removal van, or carer visits, etc.

Access is a significant factor in many home purchase or renting decisions. It could be significant repercussions for families or homeowners to *suddenly* lose access (through a non-consulted proposal like this) to parking at their frontage or even near to it. It may have valuation implications too.

Tradies have already indicated that they'll turn down work on properties that have parking challenges like these.

#### 14. Limited access

Installation of a bike lane reminds us of *limited access roads*. WCC policy states that nothing can obstruct a bike lane, so residents lumbered with one being installed outside their address will be seriously disadvantaged (the losers).

There would seem to be significant implications for legal land titles. A land title isn't issued without frontage to a legal road. But what use is the legal road if the *local road controlling authority* determines, out of the blue, that it wants to obstruct access the property (title) and thus the servicing of the property, such that use and enjoyment of the property is impacted?

But there are no options examined that point to ways to avoid these dramatic win-lose scenarios. None have been explored, evaluated or reported on as part of this proposal?

#### 15. Decision making process

Will this complex traffic resolution will be decided upon by WCC's Regulatory Processes Committee? This is what happened with the [Thorndon Connections](#) contested decisions.

Or, will a meeting of the Full Council take decisions on this complex, impactful design?

When will we all see a new proposal, incorporating all 'adjustments'?

How will **all** the *views and preferences of persons likely to be affected* by these adjustments be harvested? i.e. how will they be **consulted** BEFORE, the Full Council takes any decision on an adjusted proposal?

The point is that the changes residents have observed or experienced so far on Wellington's street network have been very impactful. There are many questions arising as to the contribution toward the stated goals. These are not adding up, or not obvious, to a lot of stakeholders.

#### 16. Measurables

There are, no doubt, impacts on the productivity and the economy of the city. There's **congestion** on streets at times when and where there was no congestion previously; arising from the installation of 'protected' bike lanes and other 'rebalancing' This is at a time while the economy is 'dull', and while people are working from home, and during the school holidays when the streets aren't as busy as 'normal'.

There is more complexity navigating parts of the city's streets, and some routes are no longer direct, instead loops are now necessary. This problem didn't exist with the prior road layouts.

Where are the facts, the measurable data, that proves that the city is now easier to navigate, or that logistics and productivity is now superior, or that the economy of the city overall is not impacted negatively by these road 'rebalancing' designs, and that everyone is better off.

#### 17. The Thorndon Residents Association requests to be heard by WCC.

Secretary

**Thorndon Residents' Association**

8 October 2023